DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 192 373 CS 205 896

AUTHOR Humes, Ann; And Others
TITLE Specifications for 1-6 Writing Skills Assessment Part III: Language. Technical Note.
INSTITUTION Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, Los Alamitos, Calif.
REPORT NO SWRL-TN-2-80/16
PUB DATE 15 Aug 80
NOTE 137p.; For related documents see CS 205 894-898 and CS 205 900.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; Evaluation Criteria; Language Patterns; *Language Usage; Minimum Competencies; Minimum Competency Testing; Poetry; Sentences; *Skill Analysis; *Student Educational Objectives; *Test Construction; Test Items; *Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

This paper specifies the assessment of those language skills that are needed for effective writing by students in grades one through six. Specifications are included for language skills such as language usage, grammatical knowledge, diction, sentence production, specific writing techniques, and verse (poetry) skills. An introductory section provides background materials, including explanations of how the skill specifications were selected and how they are presented in this report. In the sections that follow the introduction, the language skills are discussed, a table listing the language skills is presented, and the specifications are described for each skill. Each skill is described in detail, followed by the presentation of sample assessment items and descriptions of how these items are constructed. (Four related documents provide assessment specifications for other writing skills, including mechanics, spelling, general discourse, and specific discourse products.) (RL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED192373

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL LABORATORY
TECHNICAL NOTE

DATE: August 15, 1980

NO: TN 2-80/16

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
SWRL
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1-6 WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT PART III: LANGUAGE

Ann Humes, Bruce Cronnell, Joseph Lawlor, Larry Gentry, Caroline Fieker

ABSTRACT

This paper specifies the assessment of those language skills that are needed for effective writing. (Other writing skills are specified for assessment in separate documents: Mechanics, Spelling, General Discourse, and Discourse Products.) Each skill is described in detail; then sample assessment items are presented, followed by descriptions of how these items are constructed.

CS205896

This document is intended for internal staff distribution and use. Permission to reprint or quote from this working document, wholly or in part, should be obtained from SWRL, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, California 90720

SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1-6 WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT
PART III: LANGUAGE

Ann Humes, Bruce Cronnell, Joseph Lawlor, Larry Gentry, Caroline Fleker

A Language Skills Framework was provided for a project that had as its purpose the task of indicating language competencies in the English classroom, grades 1-6. These competencies are the criteria on which appropriate assessments can be based. One of the components of the framework is writing.

This paper describes the Language skills of the framework, as well as the appropriate assessments for the skills. In the first section of this paper, the writing skills specifications are generally described as background. Then the specifications for the Language skills are presented.

BACKGROUND

To determine the essential writing skills, the literature was searched to identify skills that are proposed as significant by language arts authorities and by state and local competency lists. Data on the instruction in students' language arts textbooks were also analyzed for skills. A comprehensive list of skills was thus compiled and then revised to retain those skills most important for success in current school instructional programs. Thus these skills reflect writing instruction as it is, not necessarily as it should be.

Grade Levels were then specified for these skills according to the level of textbook presentation, and the skills were categorized by content into a framework of writing skills. For a detailed discussion of these procedures, see Humes (1979).

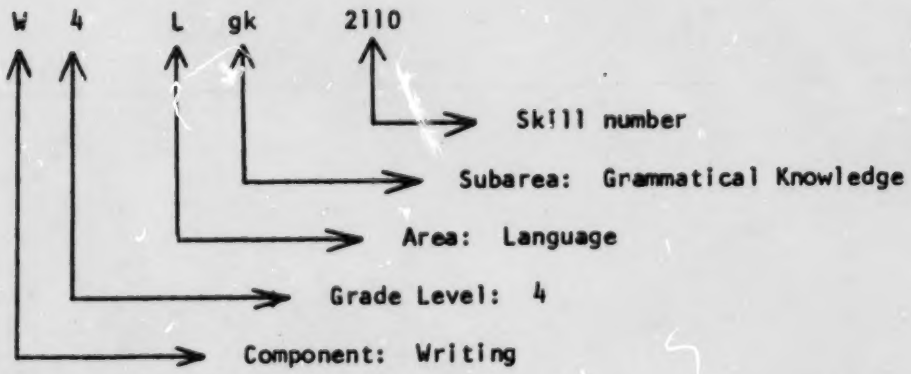
NOV 7 1980

After the skills were categorized, specifications for their assessment were developed. These detailed skills specifications provide suggested information to enable others to identify each skill or to develop appropriate assessment items. The skill specifications are primarily based on analyses of several textbook series currently used in elementary schools. This approach ensures a correspondence between assessment and instruction.

Skill specifications consist of a Code Number, a Skill Statement, a Skill Description, and an Assessment description that includes both Sample Items and an Item Description.

Code Numbers

The coding system was devised to allow rapid identification of each skill. The following example illustrates the system of individual skill numbers:



As is evident from the example above, the first symbol in a code is the letter "W," which indicates the component--Writing. The next symbol, a number, indicates the grade level. Following the grade level are letters indicating the area (capital letters) and subarea (lower-case letters) of the skill. The specific skill is indicated by a four-digit code, hierarchially divided. The left digit defines a skill. This digit may be followed by three zeros or may contain digits describing the subordinate nature of the skill (e.g., skill 2100 is a subskill of skill 2000, and skill 2110 is subsumed under skill 2100).

In addition to the Language skills covered by Part III, skills in other areas, which are sometimes referenced in Part III, are coded as follows:

Part I: Mechanics--coded M

Part II: Spelling--coded S

Part IV: General Discourse--coded GD

Part V: Discourse Products--coded DP

Skill Statements and Skill Descriptions

Each Skill Statement briefly specifies the coded skill, and the Skill Description notes factors involved in the use of each skill, including other inherent skills and prerequisite knowledge. Insofar as possible, the Skill Descriptions are written in non-technical language so that they may be understood by the general reader; however, some basic technical terminology is used to ensure accuracy in the descriptions.

Assessment Descriptions

The Assessment descriptions include Sample Items and Item Descriptions. For most skills, there are three or more sample items. These items reflect the actual requirements of each skill. Furthermore, the items are those most appropriate for the skill to be assessed. Constructed-response items are frequently included since they are often the most appropriate means of assessing writing proficiency. Where appropriate, selected-response items are delineated. In some cases, these items are either more appropriate than or as appropriate as constructed-response items; in such cases, only the former are included.

Although selected-response items are easier to score than constructed-response items, they are frequently more exacting to prepare and may even be more difficult for students because of the amount of reading they entail. However, in some cases there is no way to lower the reading requirement and still assess the skill.

Special care is needed in the construction of distractor choices for selected-response items. Those used in the sample items and described in the Item Descriptions are carefully designed and written so that they can also be used for the diagnostic purposes discussed in the Item Descriptions. For additional information on writing appropriate assessment items and distractors, see Humes (forthcoming).

The distractor choices are also appropriate for the grade level of the skill being assessed. In the sample items, the correct choice is generally listed first for purposes of explication; however, in an actual assessment instrument, the answer choices would be randomly ordered.

Items should assess ability fairly; they should not trick students. Correspondingly, specific directions are painstakingly written for the items so that students can understand precisely what they are to do. Furthermore, examiners are expected to provide necessary assistance during administration of the items so that students' understanding of a task is increased; however, examiners must also avoid giving clues to the answers. Another caution pertains to the items themselves: Most of the items (but not the item types) have never been used with students; therefore, they should be piloted at the specified grade levels.

A description of the item type accompanies each set of sample items. The Item Description details the exact procedures for completing each item, constructing additional similar items, and creating appropriate distractors. The description also notes any other important considerations relevant to assessing the skill with the sample-item format.

The vocabulary used in the sample items (including directions) is that documented for the Harris and Jacobson (1972) core vocabulary for reading from the preprimer level through grade 5. Since technical terms are generally not included in readers but are often needed for item directions, words are also used from the Harris and Jacobson content list for English (p. 106) and from the student terms in Cronnell (1979). In addition, since Harris and Jacobson eliminated proper nouns, a list of names was compiled, based on occurrence in at least two out of four commonly used elementary school reading programs. When other proper nouns are required for specific skills, those used are ones considered most familiar to students.

Harris and Jacobson (1972) commonly strip words of various suffixes; therefore, unlisted forms of words are used according to the following grade-level schedule:

Grade 1: -s
Grade 2: -es, -ed, -ing (preferrably without spelling changes until grade 3); compounds of listed words
Grade 3: -er, -est, -ly, -y
Grade 4: contractions, possessives
Grade 5: un-

All of the previously mentioned word lists indicate the grade level at which the words can be read by most students. The sample items used words appearing at earlier grade levels; e.g., grade 4 items are written in words appearing on the list no later than grade 3. This criterion helps ensure that reading ability does not interfere with writing performance.

Sometimes it is necessary--especially in directions--to use words not available at the grade level of the skill. Such words are identified in the assessment descriptions and should be read to the students. The limited vocabulary available for grade 1 precludes writing directions that use only words acceptable for that grade level; thus examiners should read all the directions to students in that grade level. (Reading directions for students may also be appropriate for grade 2.)

The sample items avoid language (connotative or denotative) and stereotypes that may offend individuals or groups. In particular, special attention is given to avoiding sexism, racism, ageism, and other negative images, such as violence and excessively aggressive behavior.

In the section that follow, Language skills are discussed, a table listing the Language skills is presented, and the specifications are described for each skill.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

This skill area includes a variety of subareas of skills relating to the use of words, phrases, clauses, and individual sentences (skills pertaining to units larger than the sentence are primarily treated under General Discourse):

Usage: Skills relating to grammatical forms comprise this subarea. Considerable textbook instruction is devoted to appropriate usage of the grammatical forms of Standard English. Misuse of such forms is frequently viewed as a sign of ignorance or illiteracy. Although some authorities believe that usage skills should not be emphasized, most textbooks, teachers, and tests focus heavily on them.

Grammatical Knowledge. Knowledge of grammar generally requires identification and labeling. These skills are assigned to this subarea. Although controversy exists concerning the value of grammatical knowledge (research suggests that it may not lead to improved writing), it is still a major component of most school instruction related to composition.

Diction. This subarea includes skills in the use of words to convey meaning. Effective diction is essential to quality writing.

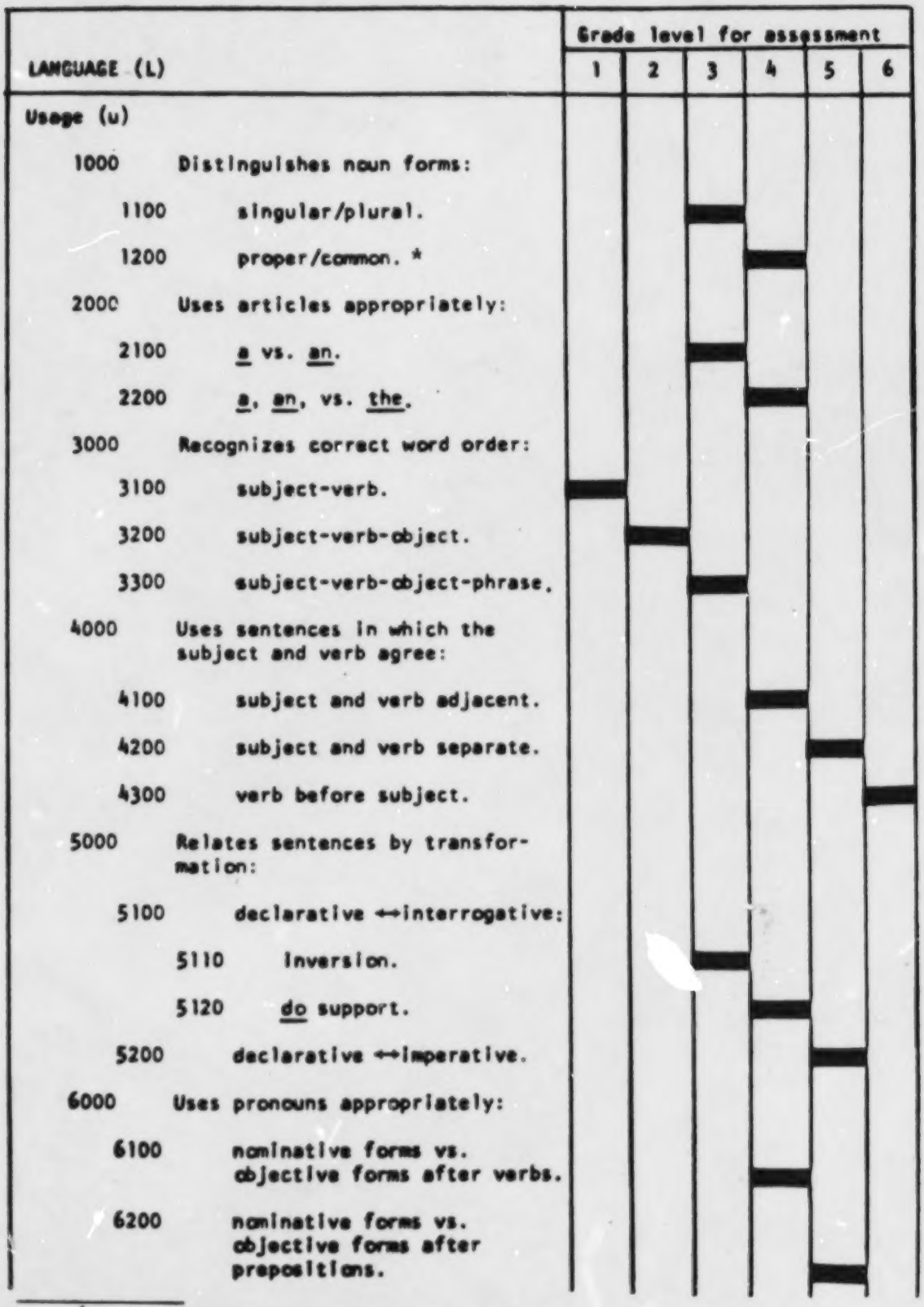
Sentence Production. The skills here reflect instructional emphasis on the ability to construct and expand sentences. Effective written products are by definition generally

composed of sentences. Although compositions can be written with poor sentences, such compositions are generally not judged as quality products.

Techniques. This subarea addresses the use of certain writing techniques that can enhance written products. These techniques include the use of transitional expressions to link sentences and the use of figurative comparisons.

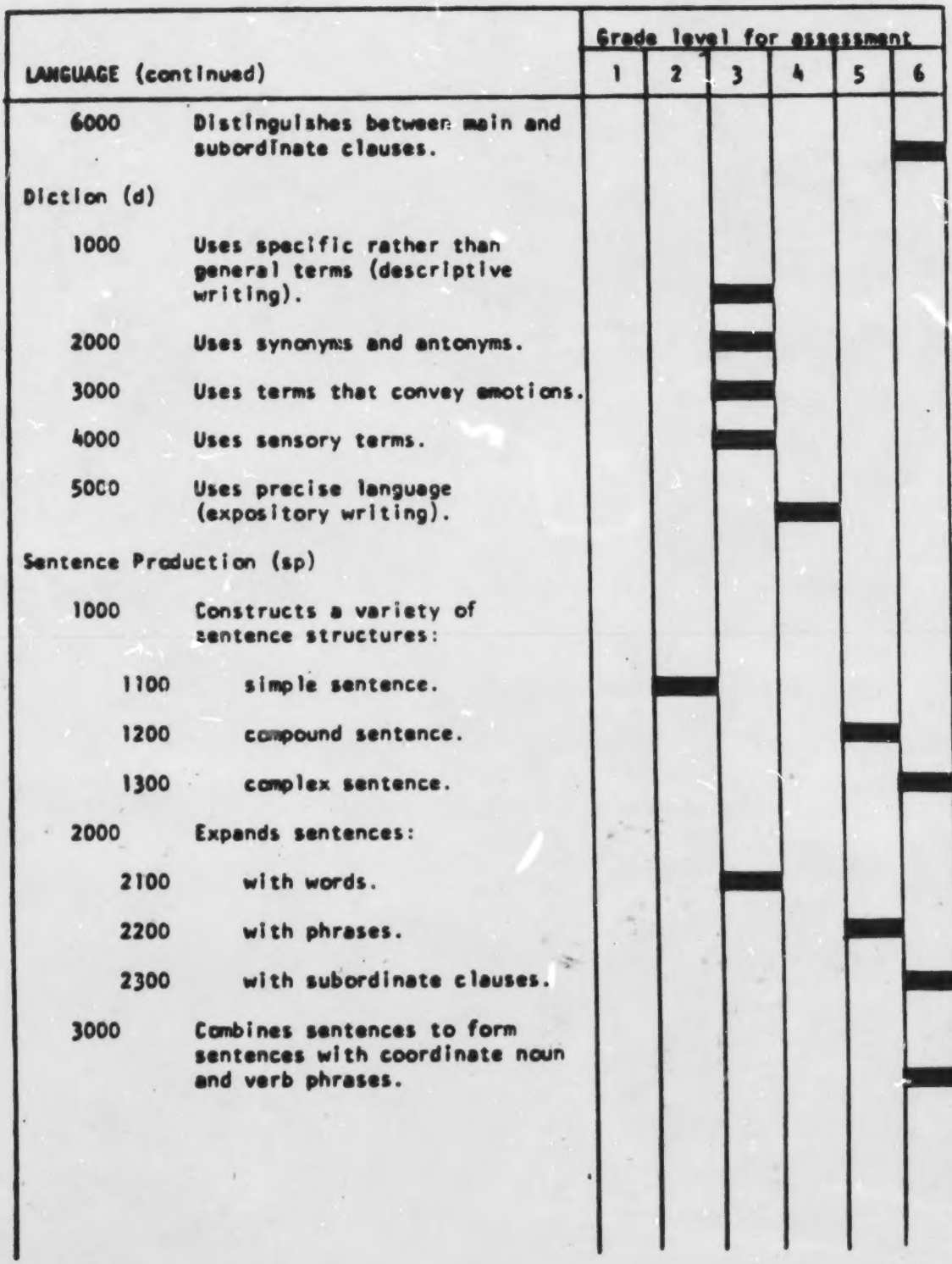
Verse Skills. This subarea includes the primary verse skills treated in textbook instruction and/or required for the writing of poetry products commonly taught in textbooks. Most authorities and textbooks emphasize poetry writing.

The following table lists all the skills included in this skill category.



*Asterisked skills are frequently recommended for assessment, but sample assessment items are not provided here; reasons for not providing such items are explained in the skill descriptions.

LANGUAGE (continued)	Grade level for assessment					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7000 Uses verbs appropriately:						
7100 regular vs. irregular forms.			■			
7200 past vs. past participle forms.					■	
8000 Uses adjectives appropriately: comparative vs. superlative.				■		
9000 Uses adverbs appropriately: comparative vs. superlative.				■		
Grammatical Knowledge (gk)						
1000 Identifies sentence type:						
1100 declarative and interrogative.*			■			
1200 exclamatory.*				■		
1300 imperative.				■		
2000 Identifies parts of sentences:						
2100 subject and predicate:						
2110 one word.				■		
2120 phrase.					■	
2200 direct object.						■
2300 prepositional phrase and object of preposition.						■
3000 Identifies parts of speech.					■	
4000 Identifies sentences as opposed to fragments.					■	
5000 Identifies run-on sentences.					■	


LANGUAGE (continued)
Grade level for assessment
1
2
3
4
5
6
6000 Distinguishes between main and subordinate clauses.
Diction (d)
1000 Uses specific rather than general terms (descriptive writing).
2000 Uses synonyms and antonyms.
3000 Uses terms that convey emotions.
4000 Uses sensory terms.
5000 Uses precise language (expository writing).
Sentence Production (sp)
1000 Constructs a variety of sentence structures:
1100 simple sentence.
1200 compound sentence.
1300 complex sentence.
2000 Expands sentences:
2100 with words.
2200 with phrases.
2300 with subordinate clauses.
3000 Combines sentences to form sentences with coordinate noun and verb phrases.

LANGUAGE (continued)	Grade level for assessment					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Techniques (t)						
1000 Uses transitional expressions to link sentences:						
1100 chronological expressions						
1200 spatial expressions.						
1300 logical expressions.						
2000 Uses figurative comparisons:						
2100 simile.						
2200 metaphor.						
Verse Skills (vs)						
1000 Uses verse form:						
1100 couplet.						
1200 stanza.						
2000 Uses end rhyme.						
3000 Uses unrhymed verse. *						
4000 Uses rhythm.						

Skill: W3 Lu 1100

Skill Statement

Distinguishes noun forms: singular/plural.

Skill Description

Understanding the concept of number as it relates to nouns, the student discriminates between singular and plural forms. However, knowledge of the terms singular and plural is not prerequisite to the skill. Students may know plural forms as "words that mean more than one."

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word means more than one?

1. A. pots
   B. can
   C. house
   D. class

2. A. babies
   B. cookie
   C. ice
   D. circus

3. A. feet
   B. street
   C. mouse
   D. glass

Item Description

The student selects the one plural form from a group of four nouns. These plurals can be classified in three categories:

(1) plurals formed by adding -s or -es to the singular form with no spelling changes (e.g., pot-pots)

(2) plurals formed by changing the spelling of the end of the singular form when adding -es (e.g., baby-babies)

(3) plurals formed by changing the internal spelling of the singular form (e.g., foot-feet)

W3 Lu 1100 (continued)

Plurals that retain the same form as the singular (e.g., sheep-sheep) are not assessed here. Such singular/plural forms are determined by context.

Distractors are singular nouns and are of three distinct types: (1) words that are similar in spelling to the correct response (all choice B's), (2) words that end with the sound /s/ but not the letter s (all choice C's), and (3) non-plural words that end with the letter s (all choice D's). Distractors are ranked by order of difficulty, where B is the easiest distractor and D the most difficult. These distractors are designed so that the student will choose the correct response because it is plural, and not simply because it is graphemically or phonemically different from the other choices.

Skill: W4 Lu 1200

Skill Statement

Distinguishes noun forms: proper/common.

Skill Description

The student recognizes proper nouns as the names of specific persons, places, or things, and common nouns as the names of general categories of persons, places, or things.

Comments: Although this skill is frequently mentioned in authoritative lists, it should be considered as prerequisite knowledge to capitalization (see Skills W3 Mc 3000, 4000, and 5000), rather than as a separate writing skill. Capitalization is the major characteristic that distinguishes proper from common nouns in writing, and the primary reason for distinguishing between the two forms is to determine which noun should be capitalized. Students are rarely required to distinguish proper and common nouns except by capitalization; i.e., students indicate that they have "distinguished" a proper noun when they capitalize it.

Distinguishing proper and common nouns is justified in relation to the study of word meaning. For example, the words China and china may be classified as homophones because they are identical in pronunciation, but different in meaning and in spelling (if capitalization of C is interpreted as a spelling difference). The student must distinguish the proper noun from the common noun in order to define the words. However, capitalization also seems to be important here. That is, the student probably reasons that China with a capital C is a country; china with a small c is a type of dinnerware. Identifying one noun as proper and the other as common may be an intermediate step in this reasoning, but it does not seem to be the most important factor.

The basic problem with assessing this skill, then, is that it must be assessed indirectly, by capitalization. It is difficult to determine whether or not students can distinguish proper and common nouns if capitalization is not considered. Therefore, this skill is not recommended for assessment since it is adequately covered by the capitalization skills noted above. (One important aspect of capitalizing proper nouns is not recommended for assessment at the elementary level. Discriminating between personal titles as general role descriptions or as proper names [e.g., I went with my father vs. I went with Father] may be too difficult for most elementary students and should not be assessed until later grades.)

Skill: W3 lu 2100

Skill Statement

Uses articles appropriately: a vs. an.

Skill Description

The student uses the article a before words that begin with a consonant sound (e.g., a box, a uniform) and the article an before words that begin with a vowel sound (e.g., and apple, an hour). The important distinguishing criterion is the initial sound of the word that follows the article, regardless of how it is spelled. For example, the initial letter in uniform is a vowel but the initial sound is a consonant; the initial letter in hour is a consonant, but the initial sound is a vowel.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word goes on the line?

1. We saw _____ lion at the circus.

   A. a
   B. an

2. My sister bought _____ used car.

   A. a
   B. an

3. _____ apple fell from the tree.

   A. An
   B. A

Item Description

The stimulus for these items is a sentence with a blank replacing the article. The student selects a or an to complete the sentence. In item 1, the student selects a to precede a word beginning with a consonant letter and a consonant sound. In item 2, the student selects a before a word beginning with a vowel letter and a consonant sound. In item 3, the student selects an to precede a word beginning with a vowel letter and a vowel sound.

W3 Lu 2100 (continued)

Comments: Assessment should also include the use of an before a word beginning with a consonant letter and a vowel sound (e.g., We waited in line for an hour). However, appropriate words may not be within the students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Oral assessment may be more appropriate for this skill. Because an oral context emphasizes the initial sound of the following word rather than the initial letter. Furthermore, oral assessment can include the use of an before initial-consonant words (the examiner may read the sentence to the student and ask her/him to supply the missing article, preferably by repeating the entire sentence). The student should be directed to choose either a or an, and not another determiner.

The stimulus should be constructed so that the article does not refer to a specific object or person; e.g., She gave a note to (a/the) teacher. Such a stimulus might confuse students because it requires them to discriminate between the definite and indefinite form of the article. This skill is assessed at a higher grade level (see W4 Lu 2200: Uses articles appropriately: a, an vs. the).

Written rather than oral constructed-response items are not recommended for this skill because they would primarily require a handwriting or copying task. The item directions would have to direct the student to fill in either a or an. So the student's "constructed response" would be minimal.

Skill: W4 Lu 2200

Skill Statement

Uses articles appropriately: a, an vs. the.

Skill Description

The student uses the indefinite article a or an before unspecified singular nouns. For example, in the sentence "I saw a boy in the yard," the indefinite article indicates that boy refers to any member of the class of young male humans.

The definite article the is used before specified nouns, i.e., nouns which have been previously mentioned or clearly identified in the context. The definite article in the sentence "I saw the boy in the yard," indicates that boy refers to a specific individual who has already been identified by the writer.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word goes on the line?

1. Liz took her new puppy for a walk. Soon _____ puppy grew tired.

   A. the
   B. a

2. Ronnie took an egg out of the refrigerator. As he walked to the stove, he dropped _____ egg on the floor.

   A. the
   B. an

3. My sister gave me some books for my birthday. I also got _____ electric train.

   A. an
   B. the

4. Albert always has a piece of fruit for lunch. Today he is having _____ banana.

   A. a
   B. the

W4 Lu 2200 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is two sentences with a blank replacing the article in the second sentence. The student selects the definite article (in items 1 and 2) or the indefinite article (in items 3 and 4) to complete the sentence.

In items 1 and 2, the first sentence refers specifically to the object or entity that is modified by the article in the second sentence (i.e., the puppy and the egg). In items 3 and 4, the first senntence does not include any reference to the object/entity that is modified in the second sentence (i.e., an hour and a banana). A two-sentence context is not necessarily required to assess the use of the indefinite article. However, two sentences are used so that stimulus length does not provide an inappropriate clue to the correct response.

Constructed-response items are not recommended for this skill because they would require essentially a handwriting or copying task. The directions for such items would have to require the student to fill in either a/an or the. Thus the student's "constructed" response would be very minimal.

Comment: These items do not include assessment of the use of a vs. an. This skill is assessed at a lower grade level (see W3 Lu 2100).

Skill: WI Lu 3100

Skill Statement

Recognizes correct word order: subject-verb

Skill Statement

The student recognizes that the subject of an English sentence generally precedes the verb and that this order may determine whether a group of words is actually a sentence. Knowledge of the grammatical terms subject and verb is not prerequisite to the skill, nor is the ability to identify sentence parts. However, understanding of the term sentence is implicit in the skill.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Which is a good sentence that tells about the picture?

1. [picture: man running]

   A. The man runs.
   B. Runs the man.
   C. The runs man.

2. [picture: dog jumping]

   A. The dog jumps.
   B. Jumps the dog.
   C. The jumps dog.

3. [picture: goat eating; what is being eaten is not distinctive]

   A. The goat eats.
   B. Eats the goat.
   C. The eats goat.

Directions: Put these words in the right order to make a good sentence that tells about the picture.

4. [picture: goat eating; what is being eaten is not distinctive]

eats		the goat

   [the goat eats].

WI Lu 3100 (continued)

Comment: The words which, these, right, order, sentence, tells, and picture may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

A picture stimulus is used in these items to minimize the reading requirement. The stimulus is a picture of a subject performing an action. The verb portrayed by the stimulus should involve obvious movement (e.g., running, jumping, eating). Verbs that do not express movement (e.g., seeing, thinking, knowing) should not be depicted because they can be confusing. In the selected-response item type (items 1-3), the student chooses the sentence that describes the picture. Correct responses (all choice A's) follow the pattern determiner-subject-verb. Distractors are transformations of the word order of the correct response, and they are clearly not sentences. Distractors follow two patterns: (1) verb-determiner-subject (all choice B's), and (2) determiner-verb-subject (all choice C's). Plural subjects should be used with caution because transforming the word order for distractor-pattern 1 can yield a legitimate imperative sentence. For example, if the correct response is The cars stop, distractor pattern 1 would be Stop the cars. The determiner always precedes the subject, even when the verb intervenes, so that the items do not assess the student's knowledge of determiner-headword order.

The simple present tense in these items may seem awkward, but it does conform to reading ability at this grade level. While using the present continuous tense would be more natural (e.g., The man is running), first grade students might have difficulty reading the inflected form running.

The physical appearance of the verb-determiner-subject distractor (choice B) may inappropriately clue the correct response. A student who recognizes that option B is the only choice that does not begin with the determiner the may choose B solely for that reason; conversely, a student may automatically eliminate B for the same reason. If this construction poses a problem, a fourth distractor can be added, following the pattern verb-subject-determiner (e.g., Runs man the). However, using an additional distractor might confuse rather than help at this grade level.

Item 4 is a constructed-response adaptation of the selected-response items. The student arranges the words in subject-verb order to make a sentence. (This item type commonly occurs in elementary textbooks.) The determiner and subject are displayed in a box as one sentence element (i.e., the goat) so that the item does not assess the student's knowledge of determiner-headword order. The determiner is not capitalized in the stimulus because capitalization would

WI Lu 3100 (continued)

provide an inappropriate clue to the correct word order. However, students should not be required to capitalize the first word of the sentence in their response. Capitalizing the beginnings of sentences is assessed at a higher grade level (see Skill W2 Mc 2000).

The constructed-response item type requires more than simple recognition of correct word order. The student must actually produce sentences in subject-verb order. However, these items are limited to only two possible responses. Thus the student may respond correctly by guessing. The selected-response item type minimizes guessing the correct response because it has three answer choices. However, the reading task required by the selected-response items may be difficult for students at this level.

Skill: W2 Lu 3200

Skill Statement

Recognizes correct word order: subject-verb-object.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the order of the subject, verb, and object in an English sentence affects the meaning of the sentence, and that word order can determine whether or not a group of words is actually a sentence. Understanding of the grammatical terms subject, verb, and object is not prerequisite to the skill, nor is the ability to identify sentence parts.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which is a good sentence that tells about the picture?

1. [picture: boy petting a kitten]

   A. The boy is petting the kitten.
   B. The boy the kitten is petting.
   C. The kitten is petting the boy.

2. [picture: a cow eating grass]

   A. The cow is eating grass.
   B. The cow grass is eating.
   C. Grass is eating the cow.

3. [picture: group of children painting pictures]

   A. The children are painting pictures.
   B. The children pictures are painting.
   C. Pictures are painting the children.

Directions: Put these words in the right order to make a good sentence that tells about the picture.

4. [picture: group of children painting pictures]

the children	pictures	are painting

[the children are painting pictures]

Comment: The words sentence and order may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

W2 Lu 3200 (continued)

Using a picture stimulus precludes an inappropriate emphasis on reading ability. The stimulus is a picture of a subject acting on an object. The student selects the sentence that correctly describes the picture. The stimulus must not be ambiguous; the subject must be clearly acting upon the object, and the verb should involve picturable movement. For example, a picture of a dog looking at a cat would not be appropriate if it were not clear whether the dog were looking at the cat or the the cat were looking at the dog.

In the selected-response item type (items 1-3), the student chooses the sentence that correctly describes the picture. Correct responses are simple sentences in subject-verb-object order. Determiners may precede the subject and object. The present continuous tense is used because the picture stimuli portray on-going action. Distractors are transformations of the word order of the correct responses, and they follow two patterns: (1) subject-object-verb (all choice B's), and (2) object-verb-subject (all choice C's).

Items should be designed so that the subject and object are either both singular or both plural. This will ensure that subject-verb agreement is maintained in distractor-type C, where the subject and object are inverted. For example, if the correct response to item 2 were "The cows are eating grass," then distractor C would be "Grass are eating the cows." A student might reject this response only because the subject and verb do not agree. Thus the item would not actually assess recognition of correct word order.

Distractor-type B presents a possible problem since the sentence is not entirely ungrammatical; rather, it is an uncommon stylistic transformation, generally used only in poetry. If it should cause too many problems, it can be deleted.

More difficult items could be written for this skill. Items are more difficult when the correct response and distractor-type C are both plausible sentences. Although such items are not appropriate, they are explained below so that writing these items proceeds cautiously.

In the sample items, distractor C (object-verb-subject) is clearly not a plausible sentence. For example, distractor C in item 3 is "Pictures are painting children." Pictures do not paint children in a real-world context. However, when both the correct response and distractor C are plausible (e.g., Jane is chasing vs. John is chasing Jane), the emphasis shifts to interpreting the picture, rather than recognizing correct word order. The "correctness" of the response depends upon the student's ability to interpret the stimulus (i.e., determining who is chasing whom). Since these items should assess only recognizing word order, and not the ability to "read" pictures, items that emphasize interpreting the stimulus are not appropriate for assessing this skill.

W2 Lu 3200 (continued)

Item 4 is a constructed-response adaptation of the selected-response items. The student arranges the words in subject-verb-object order to make a sentence. (This item type is commonly used in elementary textbooks.) The picture stimulus is used to avoid any confusion between the subject and object of the sentence.

The auxiliary and main verb of the predicate are displayed in a box as one sentence element (i.e., are painting). If determiners are used with the subject or object, they are similarly displayed (e.g., the children). This presentation precludes assessing knowledge of correct word order within noun and verb phrases (i.e., auxiliary-main verb order and determiner-noun order). The sentence elements can be presented in any order.

The first word of the sentence is not capitalized in the stimulus because capitalization would provide an inappropriate clue to the correct word order. Although students at this level can be expected to capitalize the first word of the sentence in their response, capitalization should not be considered when the item is scored.

The constructed-response item type increases the difficulty of the items by requiring more than simple recognition of correct word order. The student is actually required to produce sentences in correct subject-verb-object order.

Skill: W3 Lu 3300

Skill Statement

Recognizes correct word order: subject-verb-object-phrase.

Skill Description

The student recognizes the correct position of an adverbial phrase in relation to the subject, verb, and object of a sentence. An adverbial phrase usually follows the object in a standard English sentence (e.g., The boy bought some candy at the store). Although the adverbial phrase can also be placed in the initial position (e.g., At the store the boy bought some candy), this arrangement is generally viewed as a transformation of standard word order, frequently used for emphasis. In the example above, the initial position of at the store might imply a distinction between locations where the boy might have made a purchase. (e.g., At the store the boy bought some candy; at the post office he bought some stamps). This skill, however, involves only the student's ability to recognize standard word order (i.e., subject-verb-object-phrase), and not the acceptable transformations of that order.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: The same words are used in each sentence, but the words in one sentence are in better order. Which one is best?

1. A. She read the story in a loud voice.
   B. She in a loud voice read the story.
   C. She read in a loud voice the story.

2. A. I found a penny on the floor.
   B. I on the floor found a penny.
   C. I found on the floor a penny.

3. A. The children watched a play after lunch.
   B. The children after lunch watched a play.
   C. The children watched after lunch a play.

Comment: These items provide examples of three different types of adverbials. Item 1 contains an adverbial of manner, item 2 an adverbial of place, and item 3 an adverbial of time.

W3 Lu 3300 (continued)

Directions: Put these words in the right order to make a good sentence.

4. | a play | | the children | | after lunch | | watched |

[the children watched a play after lunch].

Comment: The word order may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

In the selected-response item type (items 1-3), the student selects the correct sentence written in correct subject-verb-object-phrase order. The distractors are transformations of the correct word order, and they follow two patterns: (1) subject-phrase-object-verb (all choice B's), and (2) subject-verb-phrase-object (all choice C's). While additional distractor patterns could be developed for these items, only two distractors are used in order to limit the reading requirement.

One distractor pattern is clearly not appropriate for these items. The phrase-subject-verb-object pattern should be avoided because it is a legitimate sentence, as noted in the Skill Description above (e.g., On the floor I found a penny). The frequent occurrence of this construction may cause the student to view this pattern as basic English word order when it is actually a transformation of basic word order.

Item 4 is a constructed-response adaptation of the selected-response items. The student arranges the words in correct subject-verb-object-phrase order to make a sentence. (This item type commonly occurs in elementary textbooks.) The subject and its determiner (the children, the verb and its (optional) auxiliaries (e.g., were watching) the object and its determiner (a play), and the preposition and its object (after lunch) are displayed in boxes as single sentence elements. This format precludes unnecessary difficulty and precludes assessing knowledge of correct word order within noun, verb, and prepositional phrases (i.e., determiner-noun order, auxiliary-main verb order, and preposition-object order). The sentence elements can be presented in any order in the stimulus.

The first word of the stimulus sentence is not capitalized because capitalization would inappropriately clue the correct word order. Although students at this level can be expected to capitalize the first word of the sentence in their response, capitalization should not be considered when the item is scored.

W3 Lu 3300 (continued)

The constructed-response item type increases item difficulty because it requires more than simply recognizing correct word order; the student is required to produce sentences in correct subject-verb-object-phrase order. However, some latitude for position must be allowed when the prepositional phrase is scored. For example, the sentence "After lunch the children watched a play," would be a legitimate response even though it is not the desired response.

Skill: W4 Lu 4100

Skill Statement

Uses sentences in which the subject and verb agree: subject and verb adjacent.

Skill Description

The student uses sentences in which the subject and verb agree in number and person. (For further discussion of subjects and verbs, see Skill W4 Lgk 2110: Identifies parts of sentence: subject and predicate: one word.) At this grade level, the subject and verb are adjacent so that it is easier to determine the connection; e.g., agreement should be easier in the The cars are stopping than in The cars on the road are stopping, where the singular noun in the phrase on the road may interrupt the relationship between the plural subject (cars) and the verb (are).

Agreement is primarily in the present tense verb forms:

1. -s or -es form with third person singular subjects (i.e., he, she, it, and singular nouns);

2. root (base, uninflected) form with all other subjects (i.e., I, you, we, they, and plural nouns).

The verb be has a greater number of forms, including past-tense agreement forms:

1. present tense

   am: first person singular subjects (i.e., I)
   is: third person singular subjects
   are: all other subjects

2. past tense

   was: first and third person singular subjects
   were: all other subjects

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word goes in the sentence?

1. Mary _____ ice cream.

   A. likes
   B. like

W4 Lu 4100 (continued)

2. My friends _____ hard.

   A. study
   B. studies

3. I _____ very happy.

   A. am
   B. are
   C. is
   D. were

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple declarative sentence with a blank replacing the verb. The subject and verb are adjacent. The student selects the verb form that agrees with the subject. Items 1 and 2 have only two answer choices. Item 3 has four answer choices because the verb be has more forms. (At least one item in the assessment should include the verb be.)

This selected-response item type commonly occurs in elementary textbooks. Constructed-response items also are frequently used. The student is instructed to fill in the appropriate form of a given (uninflected) verb in a given sentence frame. This item type can be appropriate, but it also assesses certain spelling skills (see Skills W3 Sa 3000 and W5 Ssp 2000). Therefore, selected-response assessment is recommended.

Skill: W5 Lu 4200

Skill Statement

Uses sentences in which the subject and verb agree: subject and verb separate.

Skill Description

The student uses sentences in which the subject and verb agree in number and person. (For further discussion of subjects and verbs, see Skill W5 Lgk 2120: Identifies parts of sentence: subject and predicate: phrase.) At this grade level, the subject and verb are separated by a word or phrase, thus interrupting the relationship; e.g.:

The child in the house is crying.

In the example above, the noun directly preceding the verb (i.e., house) is the same number and person as the subject; thus, the correct verb form could be selected by using the nearest preceding noun to determine agreement. However, in each of the following examples, the noun closest to the verb differs in number from the subject; thus selecting the correct form depends on recognizing the subject:

The children in the house are crying.
The child playing with the adults is crying.

Agreement is primarily in the present tense verb forms:

1. -s or -es form with third person singular subjects (i.e., he, she, it, and singular nouns);

2. root (base, uninflected) form with all other subjects (i.e., I, you, we, they, and plural nouns).

The verb be has a greater number of forms, including past-tense agreement forms:

1. present tense

   am: first person singular subjects (i.e., I)
   is: third person singular subjects
   are: all other subjects

2. past tense

   was: first and third person singular subjects
   were: all other subjects

W5 Lu 4200 (continued)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word goes in the sentence?

1. My friends usually _____ at night.

   A. study
   B. studies

2. The boy over there _____ two bicycles.

   A. has
   B. have

3. The cars on the road _____ stopping.

   A. are
   B. is
   C. was
   D. am

Item Description

The stimulus for these items is a simple declarative sentence with a blank replacing the verb. The student selects the correct verb form that agrees with the subject. The subject is separated from the verb by a word or phrase. If the intervening phrase contains a noun (see item 3), that noun should differ in number from the subject of the sentence. In items 1 and 2, only two answer choices are appropriate. Item 3 includes four answer choices because the verb be has more forms. (At least one item in the assessment should include be.)

This selected-response item type is commonly used in elementary textbooks. Constructed-response items are also frequently used. The student is instructed to fill in the appropriate form of a given (uninflected) verb in a given sentence frame. Although this item type can be appropriate, it also assesses certain spelling skills (see Skills W3 Sa 3000 and W4 Ssp 2000). Therefore, selected-response assessment is recommended.

Skill: W6 Lu 4300

Skill Statement

Uses sentences in which the subject and verb agree: verb before subject.

Skill Description

The student uses sentences in which the subject and verb agree in person and number. Assessment at this grade level covers structures in which the verb precedes the subject, most commonly in interrogatives and in empty-*there* sentences.

Agreement is primarily in the present tense verb forms:

1. *-s* or *-es* form with third person singular subjects (i.e., *he*, *she*, *it*, and singular nouns);

2. root (base, uninflected) form with all other subjects (i.e., *I*, *you*, *we*, *they*, and plural nouns).

However, the verb *be* has a greater number of forms, including past-tense agreement forms:

1. present tense

   am: first person singular subjects (i.e., *I*)
   is: third person singular subjects
   are: all other subjects

2. past tense

   was: first and third person singular subjects
   were: all other subjects

When the verb comes before the subject, agreement is usually indicated by the appropriate forms of *be* and of the auxiliaries *do* and *have*.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word goes in the sentence?

1. _____ Maria like ice cream?

   A. Does
   B. Do

2. _____ you seen my coat?

   A. Have
   B. Has

W6 Lu 4300 (continued)

3. There _____ many books in the room.

A. were
B. was
C. is
D. am

Item Description

The stimulus is either an interrogative sentence (items 1 and 2) or an empty-*there* sentence (item 3) containing a blank for forms of *be*, *do*, or *have*. The student selects the correct verb form that agrees with the subject. In items 1 and 2, only two answer choices are appropriate. Item 3 includes four answer choices because *be* has more agreement forms. (At least one item in the assessment should include the verb *be*.)

This selected-response item type commonly occurs in elementary textbooks. Constructed-response items are also frequently used. The student is given a sentence frame and is instructed to fill in the appropriate form of a given (uninflected) verb. This item type can be appropriate, but it also assesses certain spelling skills (see Skills W3 Sa 3000 and W4 Ssp 2000). Therefore, selected-response assessment is recommended.

Skill: W3 Lu 5110

Skill Statement

Relates sentences by transformation: declarative ↔ interrogative: inversion.

Skill Description

The student transforms declarative sentences into interrogative sentences, and interrogative sentences into declarative sentences. The transformation involves simple inversion of word order and does not require the use of do (see Skill W4 Lu 5120) or the interrogative pronouns and adverbs (e.g., who, what, where).

Comment: Transformation involving interrogative pronouns and adverbs, often called the "wh-" transformation, is not identified as critical in the Language Skills Framework because many textbook series do not teach this skill.

Two types of transformation by inversion are included in this skill. The first type involves transforming sentences that contain the simple present or past forms of be (e.g., The party was fun ↔ Was the party fun?). The rule for this transformation can be stated as follows: subject + be + complement ↔ be + subject + complement.

The second type of transformation involves sentences that contain auxiliary verbs (e.g., He should water the flowers. ↔ Should he water the flowers?). This rule can be stated as follows: subject + auxiliary + main verb + object (optional) ↔ auxiliary + subject + main verb + object.

Comment: The terminal punctuation also changes in these two transformations. However, terminal punctuation is covered by separate skills in the framework and is not assessed here (see Skills W2 Mp 1100 and W2 Mp 2000).

Knowledge of the terms declarative, interrogative, inversion, and transformation is not prerequisite to this skill, but knowledge of the terms telling sentence and question is required.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Make each telling sentence into a question. Write the question.

1. The party was fun.

[was the party fun] _____?

W3 Lu 5110 (continued)

2. You have seen this show.

[have you seen this show] _____?

Directions: Make this question into a telling sentence.
Write the telling sentence.

3. Is the house big?

[the house is big] _____.

4. Should he water the flowers?

[he should water the flowers] _____.

Directions: Each telling sentence can be made into a question.
Which question is right?

5. The party was fun.

A. Was the party fun?
B. Was fun the party?
C. The party fun was?
D. Fun the party was?

6. You have seen this show.

A. Have you seen this show?
B. Have seen you this show?
C. You this show have seen?
D. This show have seen you?

Directions: Each question can be made into a telling sentence.
Which telling sentence is right?

7. Is the house big?

A. The house is big.
B. Is big the house.
C. The house big is.
D. Big the house is.

8. Should he water the flowers?

A. He should water the flowers.
B. Should water he the flowers.
C. He the flowers should water.
D. The flowers should water he.

W3 Lu 5110 (continued)

Item Description

This skill is best assessed by constructed-response items. Students' ability to transform sentences is most logically assessed by requiring them to perform the actual transformations, rather than to select the correctly transformed sentence. Items 1-4 are constructed-response items; items 5-8 are selected-response items covering the same content.

The declarative sentence for item 1 follows this pattern: subject + be + complement. The correct response follows this interrogative inversion pattern: be + subject + complement (i.e., Was the party fun?).

The declarative sentence for item 2 follows this pattern: subject + auxiliary + main verb + object. The correct response follows this pattern: auxiliary + subject + main verb + object (i.e., Have you seen this show?).

Items 3 and 4 require the student to transform the interrogative sentence into a declarative sentence. The correct response to item 3 follows this pattern: subject + be + complement (i.e., The house is big). The correct response to item 4 follows this pattern: subject + auxiliary + main verb + object (i.e., He should water the flowers).

Although constructed-response assessment is preferable for this skill, time or cost considerations may require the use of selected-response items. Items 5-8 are examples of this type.

The correct response to item 5 (choice A) follows this pattern: subject + be + complement. Distractors follow three patterns:

1) be + complement + subject (choice B)
2) subject + complement + be (choice C)
3) complement + subject + be (choice D)

The correct response to item 6 (choice A) follows this pattern: subject + auxiliary + main verb + object. Distractors follow three patterns:

1) auxiliary + main verb + subject + object (choice B)
2) subject + object + auxiliary + main verb (choice C)
3) object + auxiliary + main verb + subject (choice D)

Items 7 and 8 assess transforming the interrogative into a declarative. Item 7 contains be as the main verb, and item 8 contains an auxiliary and main verb. The distractors for these items follow the same patterns as items 5 and 6, respectively, except that the terminal punctuation is changed to a period.

W3 Lu 5100 (continued)

The distractors for all items should provide attractive alternatives for students who might recognize that inversion does take place in interrogative sentences, but who might not understand the exact word order that results. One distractor type should not be used: A declarative sentence can be changed to an interrogative sentence simply by changing the terminal punctuation to a question mark (e.g., He should water the flowers?). Sentences of this type are clearly not appropriate distractors.

Skill: W4 Lu 5120

Skill Statement

Relates sentences by transformation: declarative ↔ interrogative: do support.

Skill Description

The student transforms a declarative sentence without an auxiliary verb into an interrogative sentence by inserting forms of the verb do (e.g., The dog barked → Did the dog bark?), and transforms an interrogative sentence containing a form of do into a declarative sentence (e.g., Did the dog bark? → The dog barked).

Two steps are required to transform declarative sentences into interrogative sentences using do support. First the verb do is inserted into the declarative sentence where it agrees in tense, person, and number with the main verb (e.g., The dog barked → The dog did bark). Second, the inflected form of do is moved to the initial position (e.g., The dog did bark → Did the dog bark?). The transformation rule can be stated as follows:

subject + main verb (with tense marker) →
subject + do (with tense marker) + main verb →
do (with tense marker) + subject + main verb.

The process outlined above is revised to transform an interrogative into a declarative. First the verb do is shifted from the initial position to a position between the subject and main verb (e.g., Did the dog bark? → The dog did bark). Next, the tense marker is shifted from do to the main verb, and do is deleted from the sentence (e.g., The dog did bark → The dog barked). The transformation rule can be stated as follows:

do (with tense marker) + subject + main verb →
subject + do (with tense marker) + main verb →
subject + main verb (with tense marker).

Comment: The terminal punctuation is also changed in these two transformations. However, terminal punctuation is covered by separate skills in the framework and is not assessed here (see Skills W2 Mp 1100 and 2000).

Knowledge of the terms declarative, interrogative, and transformation is not prerequisite to this skill, but knowledge of the terms telling sentence and question is required.

W4 Lu 5120 (continued)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Each telling sentence can be made into a question. Which question is right?

1. She likes to read stories.

   A. Does she like to read stories?
   B. Likes she to read stories?
   C. Do she likes to read stories?
   D. Does she likes to read stories?

2. Our team won every game.

   A. Did our team win every game?
   B. Won our team every game?
   C. Do our team won every game?
   D. Did our team won every game?

Directions: Each question can be made into a telling sentence. Which telling sentence is right?

3. Did Tommy bring a present?

   A. Tommy brought a present.
   B. Tommy do bring a present.
   C. Tommy do brought a present.
   D. Tommy did brought a present.

4. Does Alice play football?

   A. Alice plays football.
   B. Alice do play football.
   C. Alice do plays football.
   D. Alice does plays football.

Directions: Change this telling sentence into a question. Write the question.

5. She likes to read stories.

   [does she like to read stories] _____?

Directions: Change this question into a telling sentence. Write the telling sentence.

6. Did Tommy bring a present?

   [Tommy did bring a present] _____.

W4 Lu 5120 (continued)

Item Descriptions

The stimuli for items 1 and 2 are declarative sentences. The correct responses (choice A's) are the interrogative transformations of the declarative sentences. The distractors follow three patterns:

(1) Choice B's follow this pattern: verb (with tense marker) + subject. Students who choose this distractor may not even realize that this transformation requires the verb do. They may view all interrogative transformations as simple inversions of word order (see Skill W3 Lu 5110).

(2) Choice C's follow this pattern: do + subject + main verb (with tense marker). Students who choose this distractor may realize that do is inserted in the sentences and is shifted to the initial position, but they do not transfer the tense marker from the main verb to do. The plural present tense should not be used in the stimulus because this distractor type will be a legitimate interrogative sentence (e.g., They win every game → Do they win every game?).

(3) Choice D's follow this pattern: do (with tense marker) + subject + main verb (with tense marker). Students who choose this distractor may recognize that do must be inserted in the sentence and that it assumes the tense of the main verb, but they incorrectly inflect both do and the main verb.

Items 3 and 4 are designed to assess the student's ability to transform an interrogative into a declarative sentence. The correct responses (choice A's) are the appropriate declarative transformations. Distractors follow three patterns:

(1) Choice B's follow this pattern: subject + do + main verb. Students who select this distractor may recognize that do must be shifted to an internal position between the subject and main verb, but they incorrectly delete the tense marker from do. The plural present tense should not be used in the stimulus because this distractor type will be a legitimate declarative sentence (e.g., Do they play football? → They do play football).

(2) Choice C's follow this pattern: subject + do + main verb (with tense marker). Students who select this distractor have improperly shifted the tense marker from do to the main verb without deleting do from the sentence.

(3) Choice D's follow this pattern: subject + do (with tense marker) + main verb (with tense marker). Students who select this distractor may recognize that the tense marker is shifted to the main verb, but they incorrectly retain the inflected form of do in the sentence.

W4 Lu 5120 (continued)

Two distractor types are not recommended for items 3 and 4:

(1) Subject + do (with tense marker) + main verb (e.g., Alice does play football). This is a legitimate declarative sentence even though it is technically not the correct transformation of the interrogative sentence. (The do in "Alice does play football" is generally viewed as emphatic, whereas the do in "Does Alice play football?" is simply a "dummy" verb whose sole function is to carry the tense marker.)

(2) Subject + main verb (e.g., Alice play football). This distractor places an inappropriate emphasis on subject-verb agreement skills which are assessed elsewhere in the framework (see Skill W4 Lu 4100).

Items 5 and 6 are constructed-response adaptations of the selected-response items. Transformation skills are more appropriately assessed by constructed-response items, but students can respond correctly to these items without performing the desired transformation. For example, the student could respond to item 5 by simply changing the terminal punctuation of the declarative sentence (e.g., She likes to read stories?). In item 6, the student could retain the verb did in the declarative sentence and still have a legitimate sentence (e.g., Tommy did bring a present). These problems can be minimized by expanding the item directions to specifically require the do transformation. However, the directions might then become confusingly complex. Another alternative is to provide students with a model of the transformation; e.g.:

> See how this telling sentence is changed into a question:
>
> > She likes to read stories. → Does she like to read stories?
>
> Change this telling sentence into a question in the same way.
>
> > Our team won every game. → _____?

Students will probably find it much more difficult to construct their own transformations than to select the correct transformations, as in items 1 through 4. Although constructed-respone items may be more appropriate for assessing this skill, the increased difficulty and the problem of eliciting the desired response should be considered when choosing the item format.

Skill: W5 Lu 5200

Skill Statement

Relates sentences by transformation: declarative ↔ imperative.

Skill Description

The student transforms a declarative sentence that contains the subject you and the modal auxiliary will into an imperative sentence (e.g., You will wash the dishes → Wash the dishes). The student also transforms an imperative sentence into a declarative sentence by reversing this process.

Comment: According to transformational grammar theory, the modal auxiliary in the underlying structure of an imperative sentence is will. However, some textbooks teach this transformation with other modals, such as should or must.

The imperative transformation is a deletion transformation; i.e., the declarative sentence is transformed into an imperative by deleting the subject you and the modal auxiliary. The rule for this transformation can be stated as follows:

you + modal + main verb (+ object) → main verb (+ object)

The transformation from imperative to declarative reverses the process outlined above. The subject you and the modal auxiliary are inserted in the declarative sentence.

Comment: Negative imperative transformations are not included at this grade level. Negative imperatives require the use of do support (e.g., You will not cross the street → Do not cross the street) and are frequently not taught in elementary textbooks.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Change the declarative sentence into a sentence that gives a command by taking out two words. Write the command sentence on the line.

1. You must read the directions before beginning.

   [Read the directions before beginning.]

2. When riding a bicycle, you should obey all traffic signs.

   [When riding a bicycle, obey all traffic signs.]

3. Before you enter the room, you must wipe your feet.

[Before you enter the room, wipe your feet.]

Comment: The word declarative may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Constructed-response items are appropriate for assessing this transformation skill. Students transform the declarative sentences into imperative sentences by deleting the subject you and the modal auxiliary. The three types of declarative sentences for these items are listed in order of increasing difficulty. Item 1 contains a declarative sentence beginning with you; item 2 contains a declarative sentence beginning with a participial phrase; item 3 contains a declarative sentence beginning with an adverbial clause. Items 2 and 3 are designed to prevent the student from automatically deleting the first two words of the declarative sentence. Item 3 is the most difficult distractor type because the student must also determine which you to delete.

The item directions instruct the student to transform the declarative sentence "by taking out two words." Although this restriction makes the items somewhat mechanical, it is necessary to ensure that the student will construct a syntactic rather than a semantic imperative. A semantic imperative expresses a command by its meaning, rather than by its syntax. For example, the sentence "You will wash the dishes" is syntactically declarative, yet its meaning may be imperative. The skill assessed here, however, is concerned only with the transformation of syntax.

Comment: Textbook instruction in this skill is often more mechanical than this assessment because textbooks generally present a model and then require students to transform sentences to match the model.

Although this skill also includes the transformation from imperative to declarative, assessment of this transformation is not recommended because item directions would have to specify that the student add you and a modal auxiliary to the imperative sentence. If the directions did not include this specification, the student could legitimately respond by constructing a declarative sentence that was not the correct transformation. For example, if the stimulus were "Wash the dishes," students could respond with the declarative sentence, "He did wash the dishes." This would be an appropriate response to the directions even though it is not the desired transformation. However, item directions that specify the addition of you and a modal auxiliary would make the items so mechanical that they would not necessarily assess the student's mastery of the skill. The items would then become exercises in following directions.

Skill: W4 Lu 6100

Skill Statement

Uses pronouns appropriately: nominative forms vs. objective forms after verbs.

Skill Description

The student uses nominative forms of pronouns as subjects and objective (accusative) forms as objects of verbs. With the exception of you and it, English personal pronouns have different forms for subject and object use: I-me, he-him, she-her, we-us, they-them.

Subject: { I / He / She / We / They } went to the movies.

Object: Pat saw { me / him / her / us / them }.

In short sentences, as illustrated above, correct pronoun usage may not be difficult. However, pronouns in conjoined noun phrases seem to cause usage problems; e.g.:

Terry and I went to the movies. (Often: Terry and me.)

Pat saw Terry and me. (Sometimes: Terry and I--hypercorrection.)

Two less common and more difficult pronoun-form uses are not included in this skill:

1. who and whom (Use of whom is unusual currently.)
2. Nominative forms after be; e.g., It is I. (Also uncommon currently.)

Objective forms are also used after prepositions; see Skill W5 Lu 6200.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word completes the sentence? Choose the word that you would use in school.

1. _____ will go to the store.

A. He
B. Him

W4 Lu 6100 (continued)

2. Did you see _____ leave?

   A. her
   B. she

3. Isabel and _____ would like to play with you.

   A. I
   B. me

4. Mike was helping Linda and _____.

   A. me
   B. I

Item Description

The stimulus is a sentence with a blank inserted for the assessed pronoun. The student selects the correct pronoun form from two choices.

The distractor differs from the correct answer, choice A, only in subject/object form. It agrees with the target pronoun in both number and gender.

Items 1 and 2 represent a relatively early stage in pronoun discrimination and usage. Students who have difficulty with this type of item have not yet learned the difference between nominative and objective forms. Items 3 and 4 reflect the use of pronouns in conjoined noun phrases. Improper pronoun usage in this type of construction is common among students at this level.

Skill: W5 Lu 6200

Skill Statement

Uses pronouns appropriately: nominative forms vs. objective forms after prepositions.

Skill Description

The student uses (1) nominative forms of pronouns as subjects and (2) objective (accusative) forms as objects of prepositions. With the exception of you and it, English personal pronouns have different forms for subject- and object-of-preposition use: I-me, he-him, she-her, we-us, they-them.

Subject: { I / He / She / We / They } studied last night.

Object of preposition: Terry looked at { me / him / her / us / them }.

In short sentences, as illustrated above, correct pronoun usage may not be difficult. However, pronouns in conjoined noun phrases seem to cause usage problems; e.g.:

Pat and I studied last night. (Often: Pat and me.)

Terry looked at Pat and me. (Sometimes: Pat and I--hypercorrection.)

Two less common and more difficult correct pronoun-form uses are not included in this skill:

1. who and whom (Use of whom is unusual currently.)
2. nominative forms after be; e.g., It is she. (Also uncommon currently.)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word completes the sentence? Choose the word that you would use in school.

1. _____ will be here very soon.

   A. She
   B. Her

W5 Lu 6200 (continued)

2. Will you please get a book for _____?

   A. me
   B. I

3. Roberto and _____ will study together.

   A. I
   B. me

4. Would you like to come with Jenny and _____?

   A. me
   B. I

Item Description

The stimulus is a sentence with a blank space inserted for the assessed pronoun. The student selects the correct pronoun form from two choices.

The distractor differs from the correct answer, choice A, only in subject/object form. It agrees with the target pronoun in both number and gender.

Items 1 and 2 reflect a relatively early stage in pronoun discrimination and usage. Students who have difficulty with this type of item have not yet learned the difference between nominative and objective forms. Items 3 and 4 reflect the use of pronouns in conjoined noun phrases. Improper pronoun usage in this type of construction is common among students at this level.

Skill: W3 Lu 7100

Skill Statement

Uses verbs appropriately: regular vs. irregular forms.

Skill Description

The student uses the appropriate inflected forms of regular and irregular verbs. Regular verbs form their past and past participle forms by adding -ed to the present form. (This process sometimes entails dropping the final e, doubling the final consonant, or changing the final y to i before adding the suffix.) The past and past participle forms of irregular verbs are formed through spelling and pronunciation changes (e.g., swim, swam, swum).

Implicit in this skill are two fundamental levels of understanding. First, the student must be able to identify regular and irregular verbs. For example, the student must know that the past tense and past participle of work are formed by adding -ed, but that this principal does not apply to bring. Second, the student must be able to supply the correct past forms of the irregular verb, i.e., brought instead of brang.

Comment: This skill does not include discriminating between the use of past and past participle forms, which is assessed at a higher level (see Skill W5 Lu 7200).

The English language has over 100 irregular verbs, but students at this grade level should not be expected to know all of them. However, students should be familiar with high-frequency representatives of the irregular verb patterns explained below. All the present and simple past forms listed here should be within the reading vocabularies of students at this grade level.

	Examples	Description
A. Verbs with the same past and past participle forms:		
1.	cut, cut, cut hit, hit, hit hurt, hurt, hurt shed, shed, shed shut, shut, shut	These verbs have the same form for all three principal parts.
2.	have, had, had say, said, said tell, told, told	The past and past participle forms of these verbs end in d, but they are not formed through the regular suffixation process.

W3 Lu 7100 (continued)

	Examples	Description
3.	bring, brought, brought buy, bought, bought catch, caught, caught feel, felt, felt keep, kept, kept leave, left, left think, thought, thought	The past and past participles of these verbs are formed by (1) changing the internal vowel and the terminal consonant of the present form, and (2) adding a terminal t.
4.	find, found, found hold, held, held meet, met, met sit, sat, sat slide, slid, slid	The initial and final consonants of the present form is retained in the past forms, but the internal vowel sound is changed.
B.	Verbs with three distinct principal parts:	
1.	begin, began, begun drink, drank, drunk sing, sang, sung swim, swam, swum	The internal i of the present form of these verbs is changed into an a in the simple past and a u in the past participle.
2.	blow, blew, blown eat, ate, eaten fall, fell, fallen give, gave, given grow, grew, grown know, knew, known see, saw, seen take, took, taken throw, threw, thrown	The simple past of these verbs is formed by changing the internal vowel sound of the present form; the past participle is formed by adding -n or -en to the present form.
3.	get, got, gotten hide, hid, hidden	The simple past of these verbs is formed by changing the internal vowel sound of the present form; the past participle is formed by adding -n or -en to the simple past.
C.	Other irregular patterns:	
1.	come, came, come run, ran, run	The simple past of these verbs is formed changing the internal vowel of the present form; the past participle is the same as the present form.
2.	am/is/are, was/were, been do, did, done fly, flew, flown go, went, gone make, made, made ride, rode, ridden send, sent, sent stand, stood, stood write, wrote, written	These verbs do not follow any of the patterns noted above.

W3 Lu 7100 (continued)

These patterns are not intended to be comprehensive descriptions of all irregular English verbs. They do, however, provide a framework for determining appropriate assessment content.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: One word is missing in each sentence. Choose the word that should go in the sentence.

1. The batter _____ the ball over the fence.

   A. hit
   B. hitted
   C. hat

2. Beth _____ that she was hungry.

   A. said
   B. sayed
   C. saided

3. Dan _____ his pet duck to school.

   A. brought
   B. bringed
   C. brang

4. We _____ some money in our piggy bank.

   A. found
   B. finded
   C. founded

5. We _____ in the pool.

   A. swam
   B. swimmed
   C. swammed

6. Mike _____ pretty flowers in his garden.

   A. grew
   B. growed
   C. grewed

W3 Lu 7100 (continued)

7. Al _____ a bike for his birthday.

   A. got
   B. getted
   C. gotted

8. We _____ all the way home from school.

   A. ran
   B. runned
   C. ranned

9. Fran _____ with her brother to the game.

   A. went
   B. goed
   C. wented

10. The rabbit _____ through the forest.

    A. hopped
    B. hopt
    C. hopted

Directions: The word inside the box is not the right one for the sentence. On the line after the sentence, write the form of the word in the box that shows past time.

11. Dan [bring] his pet duck to school yesterday. _____

    Comment: The word form may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Items 1 through 9 assess the irregular verb patterns explained in the Skill Description above. The distractors are designed to provide diagnostic information on the two levels of understanding implicit in the skill. Distractor B treats the irregular verb as if it were regular, adding an -ed to the present form. Thus students who select this distractor may be unable to distinguish irregular from regular verbs. Distractor C treats the verb as if it were irregular, but the form is not correct. Most distractor C's are the past form of the verb with the -ed suffix added (e.g., find-founded). Some distractor C's, though, reflect common errors in inflecting irregular verbs, such as brang instead of brought. Students who consistently choose distractor C are probably more knowledgeable of English verbs than are those students who select distractor B. Students who consistently select B may not even be aware that irregular verbs exist.

W3 Lu 7100 (continued)

These items can also be adapted to assess past participle forms by inserting an auxiliary verb in the item stem. For items 5 through 9 this would also require substituting the past participle form as choice A. In this case, though, the simple past form should not be used as a distractor because students are not required to discriminate between the use of the simple past and the past participle until grade 5 (see Skill W5 Lu 7200).

Since the skill also requires students to use regular verb forms correctly, one or more items should contain a regular verb. Item 10 is an example of this type. Here the distractors are designed to be similar to (1) irregular pattern A-3 (choice B) or (2) irregular pattern A-3 with the inflectional suffix -ed (choice C).

> Comment: Choice B assesses a spelling rather than a pronunciation change.

Constructed-response items can also be used to assess this skill; item 11 provides an example of a constructed-response adaptation of the selected-response format. Item 11 is adapted from item 3 by putting the present tense form of the verb in a box within the sentence and by including a time cue to indicate past action (yesterday). However, a constructed-response item may actually assess past vs. past participle, a grade 5 skill, rather than the present skill. When constructed-response items are used, spelling should not be an assessment criterion; reasonable approximations of correct spellings are satisfactory.

Skill: W5 Lu 7200

Skill Statement

Uses verbs appropriately: past vs. past participle forms.

Skill Description

The student uses past tense forms when no auxiliary precedes the verb, and past participle forms when a form of the auxiliary verb have precedes the main verb; e.g.:

We went to the movies yesterday.
We have gone to the movies several times this month.

The distinction between past and past participle forms is most crucial for irregular verbs (see Skill W3 Lu 7100); for regular verbs, the two forms are identical, with an auxiliary verb distinguishing the past participle form; e.g.:

We rushed to the movies yesterday.
We have rushed to the movies several times this month.

Students should be able to use the most common irregular verbs correctly in their past and past participle forms. The following are frequently included in elementary school language arts instruction: came/come, did/done, gave/given, ran/run, rang/rung, saw/seen, spoke/spoken, threw/thrown, went/gone, wrote/written. Others occurring with some frequency in instruction include ate/eaten, began/begun, broke/broken, chose/chosen, drank/drunk, fell/fallen, grew/grown, knew/known, rode/ridden, sang/sung, took/taken, tore/torn, wore/worn.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word goes in the sentence?

1. They _____ to see us last week.

   A. came
   B. come

2. Have you _____ Jeff today?

   A. seen
   B. saw

3. The clock had _____ from the wall.

   A. fallen
   B. fell

W5 Lu 7200 (continued)

Directions: The word inside the box is not the right one for the sentence. On the line after the sentence, write the form of the word that shows past time.

4. We have [choose] our team captain. _____

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple declarative or interrogative sentence with a blank replacing the main verb. In the selected-response item type (items 1-3), the student selects the correct past or past participle form (all choice A's) to complete the sentence. The distractor is the other (incorrect) form. Answer choices are limited to two in these items in order to provide precise assessment of the skill. Additional distractors (e.g., comed or camed in item 1) would assess the use of regular vs. irregular verb forms rather than past vs. past participle forms (see Skill W3 Lu 7100). However, the student has a fifty-percent chance of guessing the correct response when only two choices are provided.

Item 4 is a constructed-response adaptation of the selected-response items. The student is given a sentence frame and is directed to fill in the correct form of a given (uninflected) verb. Constructed-response items can preclude the guessing that can be associated with selected-response assessment. Moreover, for constructed-response items the student must generate the past and past participle forms (which also assess the student's knowledge of irregular verb forms). Constructed-response items are more difficult, and thus they measure greater mastery of the skill. When constructed-response items are used, spelling should not be an assessment criterion; reasonable approximations of correct spellings are satisfactory.

Skill: W4 Lu 8000

Skill Statement

Uses adjectives appropriately: comparative vs. superlative.

Skill Description

The student uses the comparative adjective form when comparing two entities and uses the superlative adjective form when comparing more than two entities; e.g.:

Pat is taller than Terry.
Pat is the tallest student in the school.

Comparatives are generally formed (1) by adding -er to the base form of an adjective (e.g., bigger) or (2) by preceding an adjective with more (e.g., more natural). Superlatives are generally formed (1) by adding -est to a base form (e.g., happiest) or (2) by preceding an adjective with most (e.g., most complete). The suffix is always used with one-syllable adjectives, while the preceding-word form is always used with three-syllable and longer adjectives. The suffix is commonly, but not always, used with two-syllable adjectives.

The words more, better, and worse are comparative adjectives; more is the only one used to form comparative adjectives in conjunction with other adjectives. Most, best, and worst are superlative adjectives; most is the only one used to form superlative adjectives in conjunction with other adjectives.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word or words best complete the sentence?

1. María is _____ than her brother.

   A. older
   B. oldest
   C. more old
   D. most old

2. Linda was excited about the trip, but John was even _____.

   A. more excited
   B. most excited
   C. exciteder
   D. excitedest

W4 Lu 8000 (continued)

3. That must be the _____ dog in the world!

   A. biggest
   B. bigger
   C. most big
   D. more big

4. It was the _____ magic trick she had ever tried.

   A. most difficult
   B. more difficult
   C. difficultest
   D. difficulter

Item Description

The stimulus is a sentence with a blank inserted where either a comparative or superlative adjective belongs. The student selects the correct form from four choices.

Choice B in all items is similar to the correct answer (choice A) because both A and B are either affixed or unaffixed. They differ in degree--one comparative and one superlative. Choice C agrees in degree with the correct answer, but has the incorrect form. Choice D differs from the target adjective in both degree and form.

The student who selects choice B may be unsure of the relationship of comparative forms to the number of items being compared. Selection of choice C indicates an awareness of comparatives, but may reveal that the student is unsure of which form (affixed or unaffixed) to use. The student who selects choice D may be confused about both comparative form and differences in degree.

In selecting adjectives to be used in assessing this skill, examiners must avoid the use of adjectives that are compared in both ways (e.g., calm-calmer-more calm) and those that cannot be compared because they have no variance in degree (e.g., perfect, straight).

Skill: W4 Lu 9000

Skill Statement

Uses adverbs appropriately: comparative vs. superlative

Skill Description

The student uses the comparative adverb form when comparing two events or qualities, and uses the superlative adverb form when comparing three or more events or qualities.

Comparatives and superlatives are generally formed by preceding the adverb with more or most, respectively (e.g., more easily, most sadly). Some adverbs, however, show degrees of comparison by adding the suffixes -er and -est (e.g., faster, soonest).

Comment: Unlike comparative/superlative adjectives, comparative/superlative adverbs are not used very frequently.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word or words best complete the sentence?

1. Linda spends her money _____ than Pat.

   A. more carefully
   B. most carefully
   C. carefuler
   D. carefulest

2. Billy arrived _____ than Isabel.

   A. earlier
   B. earliest
   C. more early
   D. most early

3. Everyone worked hard, but John worked _____.

   A. most eagerly
   B. more eagerly
   C. eagerest
   D. eagerer

4. Of all the girls, Sue ran _____.

   A. fastest
   B. faster
   C. most fast
   D. more fast

W4 Lu 9000 (continued)

Item Description

The sitmulus is a sentence with a blank inserted where either a comparative or superlative adverb belongs. The student selects the correct form from four choices.

Choice B in all items is similar to the correct answer (choice A) in all Items) since both are either affixed or unaffixed. They differ in degree--one comparative and one superlative. Choice C agrees in degree with the correct answer, but has the incorrect form. Choice D differs from the target adverb in both degree and form.

The student who selects choice B has learned to use comparative adverb forms but may be unsure of their relationship to the number of items being compared. Selection of choice C also indicates an awareness of comparatives, but may reveal that the student is unsure of which form (affixed or unaffixed) to use. The student who selects choice D may be confused about both comparative form and differences in degree.

Skill: W3 Lgk 1100

Skill Statement

Identifies sentence type: declarative and interrogative.

Skill Description

The student identifies a declarative sentence as a sentence that makes a statement and an interrogative sentence as a sentence that asks a question.

Comments: Although the identification of declarative and interrogative sentences is frequently included on authoritative lists of writing skills, assessing it poses a problem. The difficulty is in the assumption that a sentence has an intrinsic "statement-ness" or "question-ness" that makes it either declarative or interrogative, and that this identifying characteristic is independent of the sentence's terminal punctuation, which is assessed as a separate skill (see Skill W2 Mp 1100 and W2 Mp 2000), or its syntax, which is also assessed as a separate skill (see Skills W3 Lu 5110 and W4 Lu 5120).

If terminal punctuation and word order are not considered in this skill, then either voice intonation or presence of a question (wh-) word must be the distinguishing characteristic that enables a student to identify declarative and interrogative sentences. However, identifying sentence types by oral intonation is a skill of oral comprehension rather than writing. Written language can only suggest intonation through punctuation. And, as has already been noted, the use of terminal punctuation is specified and assessed as a separate skill.

The presence of a wh- word is also an inappropriate criterion for identifying declarative and interrogative sentences. Although a wh- word often distinguishes interrogative sentences (e.g., What did he tell you?), declarative sentences can also be introduced by wh- words (e.g., What he told me was interesting). Thus the presence of a wh- word alone does not discriminate between interrogative and declarative sentences.

W3 Lgk 1100 (continued)

In a written context, then, the problem is whether or not declarative and interrogative sentences can be identified without relying on the related skills of punctuation and sentence transformation. State competency skill lists and lists developed by language authorities usually do include identification of sentence types as a separate writing skill. However, textbooks usually combine this skill with punctuation for both instruction and assessment. That is, the student "identifies" declarative and interrogative sentences by supplying the appropriate terminal punctuation. Therefore, identfication of declarative and interrogative sentences is not recommended for assessment as it is already adequately covered by the punctuation and transformation skills noted above.

Skill: W4 Lgk 1200

Skill Statement

Identifies sentence type: exclamatory.

Skill Description

The student identifies exclamatory sentences as sentences that express strong emotion and end with an exclamation point.

Comment: The identification of exclamatory sentences is frequently mentioned in authoritative lists of writing skills. However, separating this skill from the use of the exclamation point (see Skill W4 Mp 3000) is difficult because exclamatory sentences are defined in writing by their terminal punctuation. For example, the exclamatory sentence "My feet hurt!" is distinguished from the declarative sentence "My feet hurt." only by its punctuation. The exclamation point tells the reader that the sentence should be read with emotion; there is nothing intrinsically exclamatory about the sentence.

Identification of exclamatory sentences is usually assessed in textbooks by items that require the student to fill in the missing terminal punctuation. The sentences below are typical of textbook assessments:

1) We were three miles out in the ocean__
2) Look at those ugly teeth__
3) Please call the doctor__

This type of assessment poses a problem because the distinction between declarative, exclamatory, and imperative sentences becomes a matter of personal interpretation when the terminal punctuation is not given. Either periods or exclamation points could be used correctly for all three sentences above. In addition, many exclamatory sentences are similar to items 2 and 3: They are imperative in structure, but may be punctuated as exclamations; i.e., they give a command, but they can also express that command with strong emotion. This factor suggests that exclamatory sentences cannot be identified outside either their punctuation or oral context. Therefore, identification of exclamatory sentences is not recommended for assessment because it is adequately covered by the punctuation skill noted above.

Skill: W4 Lgk 1300

Skill Statement

Identifies sentence type: imperative.

Skill Description

The student identifies imperative sentences as sentences that give a command. Imperative sentences are also distinguished by their structure: The subject, you, is usually not stated (e.g., (you) Wash the dishes).

Although declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences are not separately assessed because of the problems in constructing appropriate items, items are provided identifying imperative sentences because they have distinctive structure.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which sentence gives an order to do something?

1. A. Put your toys in the box.
   B. Your toys are in the box.

2. A. Please close the door.
   B. The door is closed.

3. A. Don't get your new shoes dirty.
   B. Your new shoes are not dirty.

Item Description

The correct responses to these items (choice A's) provide examples of three different types of imperative sentences. Item 1 contains a simple imperative sentence with the verb in the initial position; item 2 contains an imperative sentence with please in the initial position; item 3 contains a negative imperative sentence.

The distractors are declarative sentences that are similar in content to the correct responses (all choice B's). The object in the imperative sentence is the subject in the declarative distractor. Declarative sentences are used as distractors because they end with a period, as do imperative sentences. Interrogative and exclamatory sentences are not recommended as distractors because their terminal punctuation would provide an inappropriate clue.

It is important to note that these items emphasize the students' reading comprehension abilities because the distinction between the imperative sentence and the declarative distractor is largely

W4 Lgk 1300 (continued)

a matter of meaning, even though the two sentences are also syntactically different. For this reason, this skill be more appropriately assess reading although it is commonly included in authoritative lists of writing skills.

Skill: W4 Lgk 2110

Skill Statement

Identifies parts of sentences: subject and predicate: one word.

Skill Description

The student identifies a word as the subject or the predicate of a sentence.

Subjects are nouns, pronouns, or noun phrases; predicates are generally everything that comes after the subject; i.e., verbs, verb phrases, verbs plus objects, etc. However, at this grade level, students need to identify only one-word subjects (i.e., single nouns) and one-word predicates (i.e., single verbs).

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Read the sentence. Which part is the subject?

1. Birds fly.

   A. Birds
   B. fly

2. Jim sang.

   A. Jim
   B. sang

3. She danced.

   A. She
   B. danced

Directions: Read the sentence. Which part is the predicate?

1. Birds fly.

   A. Birds
   B. fly

2. Jim sang.

   A. Jim
   B. sang

3. She danced.

   A. She
   B. danced

W4 Lgk 2110 (continued)

Comment: The words subject and predicate may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

The stimulus is a two-word declarative sentence that has a one-word subject (generally a proper noun, a plural noun, or a pronoun) and a one-word predicate (a verb). These two words are the answer choices. Questions (e.g., Did you?) should not be used as stimuli because their reversed predicate-subject order may be confusing, furthermore, two-word questions are uncommon in writing. Imperative sentences are not used because they commonly lack a subject; exclamatory sentences may be used if they have subject-verb structure, e.g., Birds fly!

Sentences longer than two words are not used for two reasons: (1) Additional words are often part of the subject or predicate; (2) if additional words are not part of the subject or predicate (e.g., the Then in Then Jim sang.) They require fine discriminations that students may not have been taught.

The answer choices are (A) subject and (B) predicate--i.e., the order in which they occur in the sentence. Even if the order of the choices is varied, sentence order still predicts subject first and predicate last. Moreover, the subject must be first and thus capitalized, and the predicate last and thus not capitalized in two-word declarative (and exclamatory) sentences. Therefore, students may answer correctly on some basis other than knowledge of subject and predicate.

Skill: W5 Lgk 2120

Skill Statement

Identifies parts of sentences: subject and predicate: phrase.

Skill Description

The student (1) identifies a phrase as either the subject or the predicate of a sentence and (2) differentiates between the simple subject/predicate and the complete subject/predicate. Generally, the subject is the entity about which something is stated in the sentence. The predicate is the part of the sentence that expresses what is said about the subject.

Subject phrases are noun phrases (i.e., nouns and their preceding/following modification); e.g.:

The tall animal with a long neck is a giraffe.
S

Modifiers can include adjectives, determiners, phrases (prepositional and verbal), and clauses. The simple subject is the headword of the subject noun phrase (i.e., the noun to which the modifiers relate). For example, the subject phrase in the sentence above consists of a simple subject (animal) modified by a determiner, an adjective, and a prepositional phrase.

Comment: Verbal phrases and noun clauses can also serve as subjects (e.g., Playing basketball is fun; Where he went is a mystery). However, identification of these structures is not assessed at this grade level.

Predicate phrases are usually anything that comes after the subject; i.e., verb phrases (auxiliary verbs and the main verb) plus objects (direct/indirect), complements, adverbs, and adverbial phrases or clauses; e.g.:

The children ate lunch in the classroom.
P

The simple predicate is the headword (or main verb) of the predicate phrase. The predicate phrase in the sentence above, for example, consists of a simple predicate (ate), a direct object, and an adverbial prepositional phrase.

Comment: Many language authorities state that the simple predicate is comprised solely of the main verb without any accompanying auxiliaries (e.g., Small birds were singing cheerfully). However, textbook instruction often includes auxiliary verbs as part of the simple predicate.

W5 Lgk 2120 (continued)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which part of the sentence is the subject?

1. All the children (A) were working quietly. (B)

Directions: Which part of the sentence is the predicate?

2. Susan and Tim (A) studied very hard. (B)

Directions: Which word is the simple subject of the sentence?

3. The (A) brown (B) dog (C) barked. (D)

4. One (A) boy (B) left (C) early. (D)

Directions: Which word is the simple predicate of the sentence.

5. Small (A) birds (B) sang (C) cheerfully. (D)

6. The (A) noise (B) suddenly (C) stopped (D).

Directions: Read this sentence. Draw a line between the complete subject and the complete predicate.

7. All the children | were working quietly.

Directions: Read this sentence. Draw a circle around the simple subject. Then draw a line under the simple predicate.

8. Small (birds) sang cheerfully.

Comment: The word predicate may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level. Moreover, the words complete and simple are used in these item directions, but the actual assessment instrument should use the terms that are most familiar to students. Textbooks vary widely in their technical terminology. For example, the complete subject is sometimes called the subject noun phrase; the simple predicate is often referred

W5 Lgk 2120 (continued)

to as the verb or predicate verb. Consequently, examiners should revise the directions to match the terms used by the students being assessed.

Item Description

The stimuli for these items are simple declarative sentences. Subjects and predicates are most easily identified in declarative sentences (and in exclamatory sentences that are similar in structure to declarative sentences; e.g., The jewels are gone!). In interrogative sentences, the predicate is usually interrupted by the subject, thus making identification more difficult; e,g.:

Do	all those people	like ice cream?
P	S	P

Therefore, interrogative sentences are not recommended for assessing this skill. Imperative sentences are also inappropriate because they do not contain an explicit subject.

Complex sentences are not used in these items because they would also inappropriately increase the item difficulty. Since subordinate clauses also contain subjects and predicates, complex sentences would likely cause confusion for students. Moreover, distinguishing between main and subordinate clauses is assessed at a higher grade level (see Skill W6 Lgk 6000).

In items 1 and 2, the complete subject and the complete predicate are underlined and lettered. The student selects the letter corresponding to the subject or predicate. The obvious disadvantage of this item type is that standard English word order dictates that the subject must precede the predicate. Thus choice A will always be the subject, and choice B will always be the predicate. (Inverted word order in declarative sentences is uncommon and is generally used for poetic effect; e.g., Happy was I.) Consequently, students may respond correctly without actually "identifying" the subject or predicate.

Items 3 and 4 are designed to assess identification of the simple subject. The stimulus contains four words, each one labeled with a letter. The student selects the letter corresponding to the simple subject. Prepositional phrases are not included in these sentences because students are not required to identify such constructions at this grade level (see Skill W6 Lgk 2300). The advantage of using this item type is that the position of the correct response can be varied by inserting one or more determiners/adjectives before the simple subject, by inserting auxiliaries, and by adding single-word adverbs. (The correct answers to items 3 and 4 are C and B, respectively.)

W5 Lgk 2120 (continued)

Items 5 and 6 are designed to assess identification of the simple predicate. The stimulus contains four words, and the student selects the letter corresponding to the simple predicate (choices C and D, respectively). The predicate phrase in these items consists of a main verb and an adverb. Other predicate structures (e.g., direct objects, adverbial phrases) are not included because they might be too difficult for this level (see Skills W6 Lgk 2200 and 2300). The position of the correct response can also be varied by inverting the order of the verb and adverb (see item 6).

Items 7 and 8 are constructed-response adaptations of the selected-response items. In item 7, the student divides the sentence into its subject and predicate parts. In item 8, the student circles the simple subject and underlines the simple predicate. These items types are commonly used in elementary textbooks. Often the two items are combined into one. That is, the student divides a sentence into its subject and predicate parts and then circles/underlines the simple subject and predicate. This item type is appropriate only when the directions are clearly understood by the student. Students should also be credited for partially correct answers if multiple response are required by a single item.

Constructed-response assessment should provide a more precise measure of the student's mastery of this skill. Moreover, constructed-response items can minimize the word order problems associated with selected-response assessment.

Skill: W6 Lgk 2200

Skill Statement

Identifies parts of sentences: direct object.

Skill Description

The student identifies the direct object as the receiver of the action performed by the subject of a sentence. The student may also recognize that the direct object usually follows the verb in an English sentence. Direct objects are nouns or pronouns for this skill assessment.

Comment: Infinitives, gerunds, and noun clauses can also be used as direct objects (e.g., I like to eat ice cream; I like eating ice cream; I know that you like ice cream). However, students at this grade level should not be required to identify verbals or clauses as direct objects.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word is the direct object in the sentence?

1. Tomorrow (A) Greg (B) is buying (C) a bicycle (D) with his own money.

2. The cat (A) caught (B) a mouse (C) in the kitchen (D).

3. We (A) met them (B) at a birthday (C) party (D).

Item Description

The stimuli for these items are simple declarative sentences following this pattern: subject-verb-direct object-prepositional phrase (the prepositional phrase is included to provide a wider range of distractors). In each sentence, four "major" words (i.e., nouns, pronouns, and verbs rather than determiners or prepositions) are underlined and lettered. The student selects the letter corresponding to the direct object (choices D, C, and B, respectively). The position of the correct response is varied in the items so that the response order does not inappropriately clue the correct answer.

Compound and complex sentences are not used in these items because they would inappropriately increase the difficulty of the assessment task. Furthermore, items containing indirect objects are not recommended. Although the indirect object would provide an attractive distractor, students at this grade level may not be able to discriminate between direct and indirect objects.

Skill: W6 Lgk 2300

Skill Statement

Identifies parts of sentences: prepositional phrase and object of preposition.

Skill Description

The student identifies a prepositional phrase and distinguishes the object of a preposition. A preposition is a function word that establishes an adverbial or adjectival relationship between its object and the word that the phrase modifies; e.g.:

We watched television after dinner. (adverbial prepositional phrase modifying watched)

The woman in the picture is a doctor. (adjectival prepositional phrase modifying woman)

Students at this grade level should not be required to identify the function of a prepositional phrase (i.e., adverbial or adjectival). However, both types of prepositional phrases should be included in assessment.

Objects of prepositions are usually nouns or pronouns. Although gerunds can also function as objects of prepositions (e.g., They succeeded by working hard), students should not be required to identify verbals as objects at this grade level.

Only single-word prepositions are appropriate for this level; multiple-word prepositions, such as ahead of, along with, and in between may be too difficult for elementary students.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which part of the sentence is a prepositional phrase?

1. Lisa and Sue (A) were camping (B) at the lake (C) last week (D).

2. The young woman (A) in the picture (B) was reading (C) a book (D).

3. At the museum (A) our class (B) will see (C) many old paintings (D).

Directions: Which word in the sentence is the object of a preposition?

4. On his head (A) he wore (B) a baseball (C) cap (D).

W6 Lgk 2300 (continued)

5. The roar (A) of the jets (B) rattled (C) the windows (D).

6. The guide (A) discovered (B) a pass (C) through the mountains (D).

Directions: Read the sentence. Draw a line under the prepositional phrase in the sentence. Then draw a circle around the object of the preposition.

7. We watched television after (dinner).

Comment: The terms preposition and prepositional phrase may not be within students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple declarative sentence containing one prepositional phrase. Compound and complex sentences are not used in these items because the coordinating/subordinating conjunction might be confusing for students at this grade level. In item 1-3, the student selects the prepositional phrase among four answer choices (which are underlined and labeled A-D). Distractors are other multiple-word sentence parts (e.g., noun and verb phrases). At least one distractor should contain the same number of words as the prepositional phrase so that phrase length does not inappropriately clue the correct response. Furthermore, the position of the phrase should be varied so that word order does not suggest the correct response. (The correct responses to items 1-3 are C, B, and A, respectively.)

In items 4-6, the student selects the object of the preposition among four underlined words in the sentence. Distractors are other "major" words (i.e., nouns and verbs rather than function words). The preposition itself is not used as an answer choice because it might be confusing for students.

Item 7 is a constructed-response assessment that combines the two tasks described above. The student is given a sentence and is instructed to (1) underline the prepositional phrase and (2) circle the object of the preposition. This item type is commonly used in elementary textbooks and is appropriate so long as the student clearly understands the directions. Since two separate responses are required by this item, students should receive credit for partially correct answers.

Skill: W5 Lgk 3000

Skill Statement

Identifies parts of speech.

Skill Description

The student identifies these parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, and prepositions. These are defined below.

Comment: The traditional definitions presented here are commonly used in textbook instruction. However, many contemporary language authorities define the parts of speech in somewhat different terms. For example, a noun is sometimes defined as any word that takes a plural or possessive inflectional ending. The traditional definitions, though, should be adequate for establishing the parameters of this skill at this grade level.

(1) A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea (e.g., James, kitchen, book, freedom).

(2) A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun (e.g., he, it, they). Some pronouns can also function as noun determiners (e.g., my suitcase); however, since these are sometimes classified as objectives, they should not be assessed.

(3) A verb expresses an action or state of being or becoming.

(4) An adverb is a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

(5) An adjective is a word that modifies a noun or a pronoun.

(6) A conjunction is a function word that joins two sentence elements. Conjunctions may be either coordinating (e.g., and) or subordinating (e.g., because).

(7) A preposition is a word that establishes a relationship between its object and the word that the prepositional phrase modifies (see Skill W6 Lgk 2300).

The identification of parts of speech is often taught concurrently with writing and is an important prerequisite to other grammar and usage skills. For example, students must have some knowledge of nouns and pronouns in order to learn about subjects of sentences.

The most important aspect of this skill for writing is understanding the functions of the various parts of speech in a sentence. Moreover, the identification of parts of speech is often dependent upon sentence context; e.g.:

W5 Lgk 3000 (continued)

Please pass the butter. (noun)

I will butter my toast. (verb)

Therefore, students should only be required to identify parts of speech within the context of a sentence.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: One word in each sentence is underlined. What part of speech is the underlined word?

1. The books are on the table.

   A. noun
   B. pronoun
   C. adjective
   D. preposition

2. Tony went fishing with them.

   A. pronoun
   B. noun
   C. adverb
   D. conjunction

3. Who collected the papers?

   A. verb
   B. adverb
   C. noun
   D. adjective

4. The deer ran swiftly.

   A. adverb
   B. verb
   C. adjective
   D. pronoun

5. A huge wave broke over the ship.

   A. adjective
   B. adverb
   C. noun
   D. preposition

W5 Lgk 3000 (continued)

6. We ate some cake and ice cream.

   A. conjunction
   B. preposition
   C. verb
   D. pronoun

7. A kitten was sleeping in the box.

   A. preposition
   B. conjunction
   C. adverb
   D. adjective

Directions: Read the sentence. Draw a line under all the nouns in the sentence. Then draw a circle around all the verbs in the sentence.

8. The children sang and played at the party.

Comment: Although students should be familiar with the names of these parts of speech, the terms may not be within their reading vocabularies at this grade level. Consequently, examiners may wish to read the answer choices aloud. Furthermore, the names of the parts of speech should conform to the terminology used by the students being assessed. For example, if conjunctions are normally called "joining words," then that term should be used in the items.

Item Description

In the selected-response item type (items 1-7), the stimulus is a simple sentence with one word underlined. The student selects the letter for the part of speech of the underlined word (all choice A's). Distractors are the names of other parts of speech. At least one distractor should be included whose sentence function is similar to that of the correct response. For example, nouns and pronouns can function interchangeably in a sentence; thus they are good distractors for one another. The parts of speech are listed below with their closest distractors:

noun - pronoun
pronoun - noun
verb - adverb
adverb - adjective, verb
adjective - adverb
conjunction - preposition
preposition - conjunction, adverb

W5 Lgk 3000 (continued)

Item 8 is an example of a constructed-response item type that commonly occurs in elementary textbooks. The student is given a sentence and is directed to underline or circle particular parts of speech. This item type is appropriate so long as the directions are clearly understood by the student and the parts of speech to be identified are limited to no more than two per item. In addition, students should be given credit for partially correct answers if multiple responses are required by the item.

Skill: W5 Lgk 4000

Skill Statement

Identifies sentences as opposed to fragments.

Skill Description

The student identifies sentences as word groups that contain a subject and predicate and that express a complete, self-contained thought. Fragments are incomplete sentences that may be missing a subject or predicate, or they may be subordinate clauses which have been improperly separated from the independent clauses which they modify (e.g., We stopped at a restaurant. Because we were hungry.)

Comment: Identification of sentence fragments is an important component skill of the proofreading/editing process. Students are usually required to identify (and correct) fragments in their own compositions before preparing the final written products.

This skill may be difficult for students because sentence fragments are frequently used in informal conversation with little or no negative effect on the communication process. Therefore, students may have problems understanding why standard written English requires the use of grammatically complete sentences.

Knowledge of the term fragment is not prerequisite to this skill. Students may know fragments as "incomplete sentences," "pieces of sentences," or "sentence parts."

Assessment

Comment: This skill is assessed by the writing samples for Skill W5 DPpr 3000 and Skill W5 DPpr 4000 at this grade level. Additionally, items for direct assessment of this skill are provided below.

Sample Items

Directions: Which line is not a complete sentence?

1. A. It was a beautiful day for a walk.
   B. From the valley up to the mountains.
   C. We stopped for a picnic in the forest.
   D. Then we climbed to the top of Bear Mountain.

2. A. Sailing early in the morning.
   B. The ship steamed under the bridge.
   C. Fog horns sounded in the mist.
   D. Soon the ship passed the old lighthouse.

W5 Lgk 4000 (continued)

3. A. Rain fell throughout the night.
   B. In the morning the campground was flooded.
   C. Tired campers shivered in their tents.
   D. Because they were cold.

Directions: Read these paragraphs carefully. In each paragraph a piece of a sentence is written as a complete sentence. Find the sentence that is not complete and rewrite it. You may add missing parts to it, or you may join the piece of a sentence to a sentence that is next to it.

4. It was a beautiful day for a walk. From the valley up to the mountains. We stopped for a picnic in the forest. After lunch we walked to the top of Bear Mountain.

5. The ship sailed early in the morning. It steamed under the bridge and out to sea. Blowing its horn in the fog. Soon the ship passed the old lighthouse.

6. Rain fell throughout the night. The water flooded all the tents in the campground. Unhappy campers shivered in their sleeping bags. Because they were cold.

Item Description

In the selected-response item type (items 1-3), the stimulus is a four-line paragraph containing one sentence fragment. The student identifies the line that is a fragment. These items illustrate three common sentence-fragment errors:

1) The fragment in item 1 (choice B) is a prepositional phrase string consisting of two phrases. Students are often able to identify a single prepositional phrase as a fragment, but they may assume that the additional detail provided by a second phrase makes a complete sentence.

2) The fragment in item 2 (choice A) is a verbal phrase containing a present participle (-ing) form. Here students may assume that the verbal is the predicate of the sentence since it does resemble a verb form. In addition, the verbal may appear to be a gerund, making the entire construction appear to be a noun phrase. This suggests a semantic unity that the student might interpret as a complete sentence.

3) The fragment in item 3 (choice D) is a subordinate adverbial clause. This fragment type may be the most difficult to identify because it does contain a subject and predicate.

W5 Lgk 4000 (continued)

> Students must recognize that a subordinate clause cannot be written as a sentence; it must be joined to an independent clause.

Limiting the sentence fragments to three types is somewhat arbitrary because almost any word group can be written as a fragment. Other structures commonly written as fragments include infinitive phrases (e.g., To keep dry in the rain) and relative clauses (e.g., Who were camping in the park). However, the three types described above should provide an adequate range of difficulty for assessing this skill.

The constructed-response items (items 4-6) actually assess more than identification of sentence fragments, but they more closely approximate the proofreading/editing process. The student identifies and corrects the sentence fragment in a given paragraph. Students may correct the fragment by adding a missing subject and/or predicate (e.g., We hiked from the valley up to the mountains) or by joining the fragment to a sentence in the paragraph (e.g., It was a beautiful day for a walk from the valley up to the mountains).

The important criterion for evaluating the constructed-response item type is that the student corrects the fragment error. Minor errors in mechanics or spelling should not be considered in this assessment. However, if other sentence-structure errors are evident in the student's "corrected" version (e.g., From the valley up to the mountains we stopped for a picnic), the response should be scored as incorrect.

The constructed-response item type is the more difficult assessment. Thus it measures greater mastery of the skill.

Skill: W5 Lgk 5000

Skill Statement

Identifies run-on sentences.

Skill Description

The student identifies run-on sentences as two independent clauses that are improperly joined without a conjunction. Run-on sentences can appear with or without a comma (e.g., The children swam in the pool, they had a wonderful time/That is not your coat it is mine). Although run-on sentences are usually the result of an error in the coordination or subordination of clauses (see Skills W5 Lsp 1200 and W6 Lsp 1300), they are such a common writing problem that they deserve to be treated here as a separate skill.

Although the terms run-on sentence and comma splice are often used to describe these faulty constructions, students may not be familiar with the technical meaning of these terms.

Comment: Identification of run-on sentences is an important component skill of the proofreading/editing process. Students are usually required to identify (and correct) run-on sentences in their own compositions before preparing the final written products.

Assessment

Comment: This skill is assessed by the writing samples for Skill W5 DPpr 3000 and Skill W5 DPpr 4000 at this grade level. Additionally, items for direct assessment of this skill are provided below.

Sample Items

Directions: One of these sentences is wrong because it is really two sentences that are joined together incorrectly. Which sentence is not correct?

1. A. The bird was not in its cage, it had escaped.
   B. We missed the bus this morning, and we were late for school.
   C. Because of the rainy weather, there will be no picnic today.

2. A. First we did our homework, then we watched TV.
   B. Whales live in the water, but they breathe air like we do.
   C. Even though she was hurt, Jan stayed in the game.

W5 Lgk 5000 (continued)

3. A. I can't wash all these dishes, there are too many of them.
   B. You may have your ice cream now, or you may wait until later.
   C. After the children watched the scary movie, they were too frightened to sleep.

Directions: Read these paragraphs carefully. In each paragraph two sentences are incorrectly written as one sentence. Find the incorrect sentence and write it as two separate sentences.

4. Sharon ran to her room and opened the door. Her pet bird was not in its cage it had escaped. She searched the room, but there was no sign of the parrot. Just as she was about to give up, Sharon heard a familiar voice calling her name.

5. Last night my sister and I had a wonderful surprise. We came home from school and ate supper. We did our homework, then we watched T.V. Just before bedtime, Father called us out to the garage. He was holding the cutest puppy that we had ever seen.

6. The snowstorm had lasted all night, there was a blanket of white covering the yard. I jumped out of bed and dressed quickly. Everyone was still asleep, so I tiptoed down the stairs. At the front door I stopped and put on my boots. I could hardly believe that winter had finally arrived.

Item Description

In the selected-response item type (items 1-3), the correct responses (choice A's) represent three common types of run-on sentences that are often generated when it, then, or there introduce the second clause. The distractors for these items also contain two clauses, but they are grammatically correct. Choice B's are compound sentences joined by coordinate conjunctions. Choice C's are complex sentences. The subordinate clauses in these distractors are placed in the initial position so that a comma is used to separate the clauses. This allows distractor C to be physically similar to choices A and B.

The constructed-response items (items 4-6) actually assess more than identification of run-on sentences, but they more closely approximate the proofreading/editing process. The student identifies and corrects

W5 Lgk 5000 (continued)

the run-on sentence in a given paragraph. Students are directed to correct the run-on by rewriting it as two separate sentences. Although run-on sentences can be corrected by inserting an appropriate coordinating or subordinating conjunction (e.g., We did our homework, and then we watched TV), the directions limit the student's response so that the items do not become unnecessarily difficult.

The paragraphs used as the stimuli for these items should contain a variety of sentence structures so that students may make more discriminating responses. Compound predicate verb phrases (e.g., She ran to her room and opened the door), compound sentences (e.g., She searched the room, but there was no sign of the parrot), and subordinate clauses (e.g., He was holding the cutest puppy that we had ever seen) should provide appropriate alternatives for students who have not mastered this skill.

The constructed-response item type is the more difficult assessment. Thus it measures greater mastery of the skill. However, these items emphasize reading ability, and this emphasis should be considered before selecting the item type.

Skill: W6 Lgk 6000

Skill Statement

Distinguishes between main and subordinate clauses.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that although main clauses and subordinate clauses both have a subject and predicate, a subordinate clause must be a component of a larger syntactic unit, a sentence. A main clause is an independent construction that can stand alone as a sentence. A subordinate clause is a part of a sentence that functions like a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. These three types of subordinate clauses are explained below:

(1) Subordinate noun clauses function as subjects, objects, and predicate nominatives in a sentence (e.g., How students budget their time can affect their grades; I understand that it is not my problem; That is what I said). Noun clauses are introduced by a complementizer (e.g., that, whether) or by a wh- word (e.g., where, how).

(2) Subordinate adjective clauses, often called relative clauses, modify nouns and pronouns within a main clause (e.g., We who are about to die salute you). Adjective clauses are introduced by a relative pronoun (e.g., that, who).

(3) Subordinate adverb clauses modify verbs or main clauses (e.g., We cancelled the picnic because the weather turned rainy [clause modifies cancelled]; They plan to leave when their money runs out [clause modifies the main clause]). Adverb clauses are introduced by a subordinating conjunction (e.g., after, because).

This skill does not require the student to identify the function or type of a subordinate clause in a sentence. The student should only be required to distinguish between the subordinate clause and the main clause.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which part of the sentence is a subordinate clause?

1. What I learned in school (A) was very important. (B)

2. We talked to the woman (A) who saw the accident. (B)

W6 Lgk 6000 (continued)

3. Because we were tired (A) we stopped to rest. (B)

Directions: Which part of the sentence is the main clause?

4. Susan took the box (A) that was on the shelf. (B)

5. I did my homework (A) after I washed the dishes. (B)

Directions: Read the sentence. Draw a line under the subordinate clause in the sentence.

6. The boy who won the prize was smiling.

Directions: Read the sentence. Draw a line under the main clause of the sentence.

7. You must study if you want to pass the test.

Comment: The words subordinate and clause may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level. In addition, the directions should be revised to conform to the terminology used by the students being assessed. For example, the main clause is sometimes called the independent clause or the "main part" of the sentence.

Item Description

The stimulus is a declarative sentence that contains only one subordinate clause. In items 1-3, two sentence parts are underlined and labeled with a letter. The student identifies a noun clause in item 1 (choice A), an adjective clause in item 2 (choice B), and an adverb clause in item 3 (choice A). The disadvantage of this item type is that clause components cannot be separated, thus precluding the use of relative clauses that interrupt the main clause; e.g.:

The man who stole the money was sorry.
(main clause) (subordinate clause) (main clause)

In items 4 and 5, the student is directed to identify the main clause of the sentence. This item type has another disadvantage in addition to that noted above: subordinate subject noun clauses may not be used because they cannot be grammatically separated from the main clause; e.g.:

W6 Lgk 6000 (continued)

What I learned in school (subject noun clause) was very important. (not a main clause)

The constructed-response item type (items 6 and 7) minimizes the problems associated with selected-response assessment. The student is given a sentence and is directed to underline either the main clause or the subordinate clause. Constructed-response items can include relative clauses that interrupt the main clause (see item 6). However, the problem with subject noun clauses, as explained above, also applies to constructed-response items. Nevertheless, constructed-response assessment should provide a more precise measure of the student's proficiency in this skill.

Skill: W3 Ld 1000

Skill Statement

Uses specific rather than general terms (descriptive writing).

Skill Description

The student uses specific rather than general terms to describe an object, entity, or sensory experience. The degree of specificity effectuates a concrete description as opposed to a vague, amorphous image (e.g., pointed is used to describe a clown's hat as opposed to funny-shaped).

Assessment

Comments: This skill is assessed by a writing sample for this grade level, which is described for Skill W3 DPpr 1000. See those specifications for the sample item and the item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criterion for describing the object of the stimulus: The student should use specific terms to describe the object; e.g., the student uses the term "salty" rather than "good" to describe the taste of a hot dog.

Grade 3 is the earliest level at which this skill should be assessed. However, students continue to refine this skill as they increase their vocabularies at later grade levels.

Skill: W3 Ld 2000

Skill Statement

Uses synonyms and antonyms.

Skill Description

The student replaces a word (or phrase) with its synonym (same or similar meaning) or its antonym (opposite meaning), e.g.:

That's a big cow.	That's a huge cow.
Sandy is happy today.	Sandy is sad today.

Synonym and antonym use has a number of purposes, including (1) avoiding repetition, (2) replacing common hackneyed words, and (3) obtaining more precision in word use.

Comments: Grade 3 is the earliest level at which this skill should be assessed. However, students continue to refine this skill as they increase their vocabularies at later grade levels.

This skill is prerequisite to Skill W6 GDpe 6200: Rewords text to avoid repetition: Substitutes synonyms for overused terms. It is also prerequisite to Skill W6 GDe 1300: Uses connotative language to affect audience.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Look at the underlined word. Write an exact word that has the same meaning.

1. Thank you for the beautiful flowers.
2. John has a smart dog.
3. What time shall we start to work?

Directions: Look at the underlined word. Write an exact word that has the opposite meaning.

4. This soup is too cold to eat.
5. We will need a long piece of rope.
6. Mary walked to the top of the hill.

W3 Ld 2000 (continued)

Directions: Look at the underlined word. Which word has the same meaning?

7. Thank you for the <u>beautiful</u> flowers.

   A. pretty
   B. clean
   C. soft

8. John has a <u>smart</u> dog.

   A. clever
   B. great
   C. good

9. What time shall we <u>start</u> to work?

   A. begin
   B. return
   C. move

Directions: Look at the underlined word. Which word has the opposite meaning?

10. This soup is too <u>cold</u> to eat.

    A. hot
    B. dry
    C. strong

11. We will need a <u>long</u> piece of rope.

    A. short
    B. light
    C. young

12. Mary walked to the <u>top</u> of the hill.

    A. bottom
    B. back
    C. corner

Comment: The words <u>sentence</u> and <u>opposite</u> may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

<u>Item Description</u>

Either of two types of assessment may be employed. Items 1-6 are examples of constructed-response items for which the student must

W3 Ld 2000 (continued)

generate the correct synonym (items 1-3) or antonym (items 4-6). The stimulus is a sentence in which the target word is underlined. The student must generate a synonym or an antonym for the underlined word.

Criteria must be established to evaluate the quality of the responses. Responses may be classified as good, acceptable, or unacceptable in accordance with the following considerations:

Good:	The student uses an accurate (precise, exact) word (e.g., Thank you for the pretty flowers; This soup is too hot to eat).
Acceptable:	The student uses an appropriate, but inexact word (e.g., Thank you for the nice flowers; This soup is too warm to eat).
Unacceptable:	The student fails to respond or responds with an inappropriate word (e.g., Thank you for the red flowers; This soup is too old to eat).

The selected-response assessments (items 7-12) employ the same stimulus, but offer the student a choice of three possible responses. The correct answer (all A's) is a common synonym or antonym for the target word. The distractors (B's and C's) are not synonyms for the correct answer, but words that reflect qualities associated with the correct answer. The use of such distractors is dictated by the limited number of clearly distinctive synonyms and antonyms within the reading vocabularies of students at this grade level. Items must be carefully selected so that synonym rather than vocabulary knowledge is tested.

Skill: W3 Ld 3000

Skill Statement

Uses terms that convey emotions.

Skill Description

The student uses terms that most precisely describe the emotions of humans (or entities/abstractions as personifications of humans). The student's own emotions may be conveyed; however, the task as presented in textbooks usually entails describing the emotions of other people; these people appear in pictures, in hypothetical situations described in a few sentences, and in stories. The skill covers the range of emotions within the experience of children at this grade level--love, joy, anger, fear, etc.

Although this skill draws on students' ability to make inferences, as a writing rather than a reading task it becomes primarily a vocabulary skill--what words best convey the emotion experienced or inferred from a stimulus context.

Comment: Grade 3 is the earliest level at which this skill should be assessed. However, students continue to refine this skill as they increase their vocabularies at later grade levels.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word that tells how the person in the picture feels.

1. picture of angry woman, jumping up and down while screaming at a man whose face is not shown--a back view of him

   The woman is _____.

2. picture of a frightened man seeing a ghost inside a haunted house

   The man is _____.

3. picture of a smiling baby playing with toy happily

   The baby is _____.

W3 Ld 3000 (continued)

Directions: Which word best tells how the person in the picture feels?

4. [Same picture as for item 1 above]

   A. mad
   B. not happy
   C. pleasant
   D. dumb

5. [Same picture as for item 2 above]

   A. frightened
   B. uneasy
   C. cheery
   D. stupid

6. [Same picture as for item 3 above]

   A. happy
   B. good
   C. sad
   D. nice

Item Description

The stimulus for the constructed-response assessment (see items 1-3) is a picture and a concomitant sentence with a blank for one or more words. The student writes the word that best describes how the person in the picture feels.

The following are possible scoring criteria for this skill [see multiple-choice items for examples].

Good: The response is exact and appropriately descriptive.

Acceptable: The response is appropriately descriptive but is rather general.

Unacceptable: The response is not appropriate for the picture.

Because scoring of these items may be difficult and because constructed-response assessment may not be feasible or practical, this skill may be assessed by a selected-response item type (see items 4-6). The stimulus for these items is also a picture. The student selects from four choices the word that best describes how the person in the picture feels. The correct answer is a word that precisely describes the emotions of the pictured individual (all A's).

One distractor type describes the emotions of the pictured individual, but less precisely than the correct answer (all type B's). This is

W3 Ld 3000 (continued)

the most difficult distractor. Another distractor type describes a different emotion from the one pictured (all type C's). The third distractor is a word that describes a possible reaction of the student to the picture, but it does not describe the feelings of the pictured individual (all type D's).

A similar item type is frequently used to assess this skill, but it actually assesses ability to make inferences. For this item, this stimulus is a picture that illustrates a person in an emotional situation; the student is asked to select the word that best describes how the pictured individual feels. However, the distractors reflect diverse emotions. Therefore, the item assesses the reading skill of inference, because distractors do not require students to choose between the word that best describes the emotion and words that describe it less precisely.

Emotions can be conveyed by words from all form classes (e.g., noun--joy, verb--smiled, adjective--frightening, adverb--bravely). However, assessment is limited to adjectives at this grade level because (1) textbooks provide students at this level with far more adjective practice on this skill than they provide for other form classes, (2) the reading vocabulary is limited, and (3) the item type is not amenable to eliciting answers from different form classes without revised directions for each different form class.

Skill: W3 Ld 4000

Skill Statement

Uses sensory terms.

Skill Description

The student uses words to convey images of the attributes selected for describing an entity, object, or sensory experience. These words convey the images through and to the five senses.

The writer helps the reader see the entity, object, or sensory experience by using words that create visual images (e.g., grass green is a visual image that may describe the color of a coat); helps the reader hear by using auditory images (e.g., clanging is an auditory image that describes the sound of a bell); helps the reader smell by using olfactory images (e.g., smokey is an olfactory image that may describe the smell of the air on an autumn day when leaves are burned); helps the reader taste by using gustatory images (e.g., buttery is a gustatory image that may describe popcorn); helps the reader feel (here referring to the sense of touch rather than to the emotions) by using tactile images (e.g., scratchy is a tactile image that may describe wool cloth).

Initial instruction on this skill often focuses on modifiers; however, nouns and verbs also convey sensory images. Students may use any of these form classes to create sensory images.

Assessment

Comments: This skill is assessed by a writing sample for this grade level, which is described for Skill W3 DPpr 1000. See those specifications for the sample item and the item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criterion for describing the object of the stimulus: The student must use sensory images to describe the object; e.g., the student must use a word like "salty" to describe the taste of a hot dog.

Grade 3 is the earliest level at which this skill should be assessed. However, students continue to refine this skill as they increase their vocabularies at later grade levels.

Skill: W4 Ld 5000

Skill Statement

Uses precise language (expository writing).

Skill Description

The student uses language that is precise to convey factual information. The language involved may consist of a single word (e.g., lemonade rather than drink) or entail longer phrases or clauses that constitute the major part of an entire sentence. For example, a sentence beginning with "After you use a pencil sharpener, your pencil _____" should be completed with the precise verb phrase "will have a fine point for writing" rather than the vague "looks nice" verb phrase.

This skill contributes to the clarity of a piece of expository writing. It enables the reader to grasp the information readily and exactly.

At this grade level, textbooks usually refer to "exact words" rather than to precise language. However, knowledge of these terms is not prerequisite to the skill.

Assessment

Comments: This is an important subskill of writing an expository product. Although this skill may not always be included on authoritative lists of desired competencies, or not referred to in the language unit above, students must employ this skill to complete competent expository products that are listed.

This skill is assessed by the writing sample that is described for Skill W4 DPpr 4000. See those specifications for the sample item and the item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criterion.

Skill: W2 Lsp 1100

Skill Statement

Constructs a variety of sentence structures: simple sentence.

Skill Description

The student constructs sentences that reflect normal English word order (e.g., S-LV-N, S-V-O). However, grammatical knowledge of sentence parts is not a feature of this skill.

Sentences convey meaning to the reader. At this grade level some of the student's statements may include run-ons and meaningful fragments; e.g., "A hat that has flowers." Such fragments and run-ons are acceptable if they are coherent and if the syntax seems natural and unstrained.

The simple sentences may represent any of four types--declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, or imperative; however, sentences can be expected to be predominantly declarative.

Assessment

Comments: This skill is assessed indirectly by the writing sample for this grade level, which is described for Skill W2 DPpr 2000. See those specifications for the sample item and item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criteria that refer to writing sentences for specific content.

Less structured assessment can be provided in the classroom by having the student write a sentence. However, the examiner must then determine criteria for evaluating the student's response.

Skill: W5 Lsp 1200

Skill Statement

Constructs a variety of sentence structures: compound sentence.

Skill Description

The student joins two clauses with and, but, or or to make a compound sentence. The use of compound sentences allows greater sentence variety in student writing and eliminates the awkwardness resulting from excessive use of short, choppy sentences.

Comment: Other coordinating conjunctions such as nor, for, so, and yet can be used to construct compound sentences. However, most textbook series do not teach these words as conjunctions at the elementary level.

The three types of compound sentences recommended for assessment at this grade level correspond to the three conjunctions noted above:

1. addition (and) - one clause is added to the other (e.g., The sky was clear, and the lake was calm).

2. contrast (but) - one clause is contrasted with the other (e.g., John was early, but Mary was late).

3. alternative (or) - one clause is the alternative of the other (e.g., He must obey the law, or he will be punished).

Compound sentences usually require a comma to separate the clauses unless the clauses are very short (e.g., We ate and we slept). However, punctuation of compound sentences is not included in this skill because elementary students may not be able to make such a subtle distinction.

Comment: This skill is related to Skill W6 GDpe 3000: Varies the structure and length of sentences in a paragraph.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Join the sentences together with or, and, or but. Use the word that makes the best new sentence.

1. I went into the house. We ate dinner.

2. It was raining. Miguel didn't get wet.

3. Sharon can come with us. She can stay home.

W5 Lsp 1200 (continued)

Directions: Which is the best way to join the two sentences together?

4. I went into the house. We ate dinner.

   A. I went into the house, and we ate dinner.
   B. I went into the house, or we ate dinner.
   C. I went into the house, but we ate dinner.

5. It was raining. Miguel didn't get wet.

   A. It was raining, but Miguel didn't get wet.
   B. It was raining, and Miguel didn't get wet.
   C. It was raining, or Miguel didn't get wet.

6. Sharon can come with us. She can stay home.

   A. Sharon can come with us, or she can stay home.
   B. Sharon can come with us, and she can stay home.
   C. Sharon can come with us, but she can stay home.

Item Description

Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must rewrite two short sentences to form a compound sentence. The student is instructed to join the sentences by adding the most appropriate coordinating conjunction, either or, and, or but. Limiting the number of acceptable conjunctions reduces the focus of the assessment and eliminates the possible construction of subordinate clauses (e.g., I went into the house, where we ate dinner).

Items 4-6 are selected-response items. The student is shown two short, related sentences and instructed to select the compound sentence (choice A's) in which the two related sentences are joined logically.

The stimulus sentences in items 1 and 4 depict the sequence of a particular event, and thus require one clause to be added to the other with the conjunction and. The sentences in items 2 and 5 are contrasting statements that are best joined by but. In items 3 and 6, the sentences present an alternative, and thus require the insertion of or to form a compound sentence.

The distractors for the selected-response items are sentences joined by the two coordinating conjunctions (of or, and or but) that are not appropriate for the particular sequence/contrast/alternative meaning of the sentence. While it is frequently possible for a student to form an acceptable sentence by using one of the distractors (e.g., It was raining, and Miguel didn't get wet), such responses indicate the need for further instruction in combining sentences with conjunctions that enhance clarity.

Skill: W6 Lsp 1300

Skill Statement

Constructs a variety of sentence structures: complex sentence.

Skill Description

The student constructs a sentence containing a subordinate clause. Subordinate clauses are usually of two types: (1) adverbial clauses introduced by a subordinating conjunction (because, although, since); (2) adjectival relative clauses introduced by a relative pronoun (who, which, that).

Comments: Subordinate noun clauses can also be used in constructing complex sentences (e.g., We know what we must do). However, this construction is not required at the elementary level.

This skill is related to Skill W6 DGpe 3000: Varies the structure and length of sentences in a paragraph.

The basic problem with assessing this skill is that constructing a complex sentence is a student-generated activity. That is, students at this grade level should be expected to use complex sentences in their own writing. This factor suggests that the skill is most appropriately assessed by a writing sample.

Assessment

Comment: The constructed-response assessment of this skill is indirectly included in the following writing samples: W6 DPpr 4000--Writes an expository composition; W6 DPpr 5000--Writes a persuasive composition, and W6 DPpr 7000--Writes a business letter.

The selected-response assessment for this skill is indirectly included in Skill W6 Lsp 2300--Expands sentences with subordinate clauses.

Formal assessment of this skill presents some difficulty. Assessment in textbooks often requires the student to join two given clauses with a specified subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun; e.g.:

Join these two sentences with because.

We were hungry. We stopped to eat. → Because we were hungry, we stopped to eat.

Join these two sentences with that.

Maria has a dog. The dog likes peanut butter. → Maria has a dog that likes peanut butter.

W6 Lsp 1300 (continued)

The student is given the appropriate conjunction or pronoun so that a complex sentence is elicited by the item. If the connecting word was not specified, the student could respond with a compound sentence (e.g., We were hungry, and we stopped to eat) or a sentence containing a reduced-clause modifier (e.g., Being hungry, we stopped to eat). Thus the item would not necessarily measure the student's proficiency in this skill. However, if the connecting word is specified in the item directions, the assessment becomes very mechanical, and the construction of complex sentences is a much more sophisticated process than is suggested by this assessment.

Expanding sentences with subordinate clauses is also used in textbooks to assess the construction of complex sentences (see Skill W6 Lsp 2300). Students are given a main clause and are instructed to add a subordinate clause to modify a specific word in the main clause. Although this item type is less mechanical than the one noted above, constructing a complex sentence involves more than simply adding a subordinate clause to a given sentence.

Skill: W3 Lsp 2100

Skill Statement

Expands sentences with words.

Skill Description

The student expands a given sentence by adding a word to modify a word in the original sentence. Generally, sentences are expanded with adjectives, but they may also be expanded with adverbs. The following are examples of sentence expansions with single words:

Mike has a shirt. → Mike has a new shirt.
Mike has a blue shirt.
Mike has a beautiful shirt.

We walked to school. → We walked to school quickly.
We walked to school slowly.
We walked to school yesterday.

Sentences may also be expanded with more than one word; e.g.:

Mike has a new blue shirt.
Mike has a beautiful new shirt.
Mike has a beautiful blue shirt.
Mike has a beautiful new blue shirt.

We walked to school quickly yesterday.
We walked to school slowly yesterday.

The purpose of such expansions is to use more precise language to describe objects or events and to provide interest and sentence variety in writing.

Comments: Students may expand sentences with figurative language, but metaphors and similes are more appropriately considered expansions of phrase/clause length rather than of "word" length.

This skill is related to Skill W3 Ld 2000: Uses synonyms and antonyms, and Skill W6 GDpo 3000: Varies the structure and length of sentences in a paragraph.

W3 Lsp 2100 (continued)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Fill in the blank with a word that tells more about the picture.

1. picture: a very fat clown holding three dogs on a leash.

The clown has dogs.

The clown has _____ dogs.

2. picture: bike with a flat tire. A small girl is pumping air into it.

The girl is putting air in the tire on the bike.

The girl is putting air in the _____ tire on the bike.

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Fill in each blank with a word that tells more about the picture.

3. picture: a very fat clown holding three dogs on a leash.

The clown has dogs.

The _____ clown has _____ dogs.

4. picture: bike with a flat tire. A small girl is pumping air into it.

The girl is putting air in the tire on the bike.

The _____ girl is putting air in the _____ tire on the bike.

W3 Lsp 2100 (continued)

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Which word tells more about the picture?

5. picture: a very fat clown holding three dogs on a leash.

The clown has dogs.

The clown has _____ dogs.

A. three
B. lost
C. animal

6. picture: bike with a flat tire. A small girl is pumping air into it.

The girl is putting air in the _____ tire on the bike.

A. flat
B. strange
C. toy

Directions: The sentences doesn't tell enough about the picture. For each blank, choose a word that tells more about the picture.

picture: a very fat clown holding three dogs on a leash.

The clown has dogs.

The __(7)__ clown has __(8)__ dogs.

7. A. fat
B. best
C. laugh

8. A. three
B. lost
C. animal

picture: bike with a flat tire. A small girl is pumping air into it.

The girl is putting air in the tire on the bike.

The __(9)__ girl is putting air in the __(10)__ tire on the bike.

9. A. little
B. hungry
C. woman

10. A. flat
B. strange
C. toy

W3 Lsp 2100 (continued)

Item Description

In each of the sample items, the stimulus consists of a picture and a simple sentence. The sentence contains the subject and the direct object referred to in the picture, but does not contain complete modifiers for either.

Sample items 1-2 are constructed-response items. In addition to the stimulus, the student is presented with an identical sentence with a blank in front of the word to be modified (either the subject or the object may be modified in this assessment). The student must generate the target modifier. Items 3-4, also constructed response items, present the student with a more difficult task. Blank spaces are inserted before both the subject and the object, requiring the student to generate modifiers for each.

Criteria must be established to evaluate the quality of the sentence expansions. Responses may be classified as good, acceptable, or unacceptable in accordance with the following considerations:

Good: The student uses an accurate (precise, exact) word (e.g., The clown has three dogs; The girl is putting air in the flat tire; The fat clown . . .; The little girl . . .).

Acceptable: The student uses the correct part of speech (e.g., The clown has circus dogs; The girl is putting air in the bicycle tire; The funny clown . . .; The pretty girl . . .).

Unacceptable: The student does not use an appropriate word. This criterion covers either a failure to respond or an inappropriate response (e.g., The clown has animal dogs).

Items 5-10 are selected-response items that employ the same stimulus as the constructed-response items, but require the student to select the correct answer (all A's) from three choices. Items 5-6 require only one modifier, while items 7-10 require modifiers for both the subject and the object.

Choices for the selected-response items parallel the criteria established for assessing the constructed-response items. The correct answer is an accurate modifier that represents an element in the picture not mentioned in the stimulus sentence. Choice B represents the use of a grammatically correct word that does not match an observable element in the picture. Choice C is a noun that is related to the noun that is being modified.

W3 Lsp 2100 (continued)

Inasmuch as the constructed-response task more nearly parallels the actual writing process and provides for broader range of possible responses, it is the preferred mode of assessment.

Skill: W5 Lsp 2200

Skill Statement

Expands sentences with phrases.

Skill Description

The student expands a given sentence by adding a prepositional phrase to modify a structure in the original sentence. Sentences may be expanded with adverbial or adjectival prepositional phrases.

Comment: Verbal phrases can also be used to expand sentences (e.g., The man riding the bicycle is my father; He worked hard to be successful). However, most textbook instruction at the elementary level does not cover verbal phrases as modifiers.

The purpose of such expansions is to use more precise language to describe objects and events and to provide interest and sentence variety in writing. The expansions should relate to some outside object or event; the sentences to be expanded should be presented in some pictured or real-world context so that the expansions are relevant. When students are required to expand sentences, they are often told what kind of prepositional phrase to use (adverbial or adjectival) and/or where the phrase should be added to the sentence. Students may expand sentences with similes or metaphors, but this expansion type is not required for this skill.

Comment: This skill is related to Skill W6 GDpe 3000: Varies the structure and length of sentences in a paragraph.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Fill in the blank with a phrase that tells more about the picture.

1. ⌜picture: two men standing together. They are identical except for the fact that one man is wearing a cowboy hat and is also holding a dog by a leash.⌟

   The man has a dog.

   The man with _____ has a dog.

W5 Lsp 2200 (continued)

2. [picture: two girls standing together. One is short and the other is tall. The short girl is eating an ice cream cone.]

The girl is shorter.

The girl with _____ is shorter.

3. [picture: boy jumping into a swimming pool.]

The boy is jumping.

The boy is jumping into _____.

4. [picture: girl sitting in a rocking chair.]

The girl is sitting.

The girl is sitting in _____.

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Which is the best way to tell more about the picture?

5. [picture: two men standing together. They are identical except for the fact that one man is wearing a cowboy hat and is also holding a dog by a leash.]

The man has a dog.

A. The man with the hat has a dog.
B. The man has a hat. The man has a dog.
C. The man has a hat and he has a dog.

6. [picture: two girls standing together. One is short and the other is tall. The short girl is eating an ice cream cone.]

The girl is shorter.

A. The girl with the ice cream cone is shorter.
B. The girl has an ice cream cone. The girl is shorter.
C. The girl has an ice cream cone and she is shorter.

W5 Lsp 2200 (continued)

7. [picture: boy jumping into a swimming pool.]

   The boy is jumping.

   A. The boy is jumping into the water.
   B. The boy is jumping. He is jumping into the water.
   C. The boy is jumping and he is jumping into the water.

8. [picture: girl sitting in a rocking chair.]

   The girl is sitting.

   A. The girl is sitting in a chair.
   B. The girl is sitting. She is sitting in a chair.
   C. The girl is sitting and she is sitting in a chair.

   Comment: The word phrase may not be in the students' reading vocabulary at this grade level.

Item Description

Either of two formats may be used in assessing this skill. Both formats employ a picture and a related sentence as the stimulus. The sentence refers to the subject of the picture, but omits a detail that can be seen in or inferred from the picture.

Items 1-4 are constructed-response items. The sentence is repeated beneath the stimulus, but a blank space is inserted where a modifying phrase can be placed. A preposition is provided before the blank space to assure the use of a prepositional phrase rather than a subordinate clause. The student generates an appropriate noun phrase and writes it in the blank. The noun phrase, when coupled with the foregoing preposition, constitutes a prepositional phrase.

Items 1 and 2 are examples of sentence expansions with adjectival prepositional phrases, in which the phrase modifies a noun. Items 3 and 4 are examples of adverbial prepositional phrases, in which the phrase modifies a verb.

Since sentence expansions will vary in content and quality, criteria must be established for evaluating student responses. Responses may be classified as good, acceptable, or unacceptable in accordance with the following considerations:

W5 Lsp 2200 (continued)

Good:	The student uses an accurate (precise, exact) phrase (e.g., The man with the cowboy hat has a dog; The girl with the ice cream cone is shorter; The boy is jumping into the swimming pool; The girl is sitting on a rocking chair).
Acceptable:	The student uses an appropriate phrase (e.g., The man with a hat has a dog; The girl with food is shorter; The boy is jumping into water; The girl is sitting in her chair).
Unacceptable:	The student does not use an appropriate phrase. This criterion covers either a failure to respond or an inappropriate response (e.g., The boy is jumping into that).

Items 5-8 are selected-response items that assess the student's ability to use prepositional phrases to employ sentence variety and provide clarity in sentence construction. The stimulus is identical to that used in the constructed-response items. The student is asked to choose the "best" of three ways of expanding the information provided in the stimulus.

Items 5 and 6 are examples of sentence expansions with adjectival prepositional phrases. Items 7 and 8 are examples of adverbial prepositional phrases.

The correct answer (all A's) is the stimulus sentence expanded with an appropriate prepositional phrase. Choice B is the stimulus sentence plus another simple sentence containing further information about the picture. Choice C is a compound sentence containing the relevant details, but unnecessarily repeating the subject as a noun or pronoun in the second segment of the compound.

The constructed-response format is the preferred mode of assessment as it more nearly resembles actual writing practice.

Skill: W6 Lsp 2300

Skill Statement

Expands sentences with subordinate clauses.

Skill Description

The student expands a given sentence by adding a subordinate clause to modify a structure in the original sentence. Sentences may be expanded with adverbial or adjectival clauses. The following are examples of sentence expansions with clauses.

The doctor will call you.	→	The doctor who will perform the operation will call you. (This sentence contains an adjectival clause modifying doctor; this is also called a relative clause.)
The doctor will call you.	→	The doctor will call you when the test results are returned. (This sentence contains an adverbial clause modifying will call.)

The purpose of such expansions is to provide more precise descriptions of objects and events and to provide interest and sentence variety in writing. The expansions should relate to some outside object or event, and the sentences to be expanded should be presented in some pictured or real-world context so that the expansions are relevant. When students are required to expand sentences, they are often told what kind of modifying clause to use (adjectival or adverbial) and/or where the clause should be added to the sentence. These clauses may express figurative comparisons--similes and metaphors.

Comments: Commas are required when expanding sentences with clauses (1) if an adverbial clause precedes the main clause (e.g., When the test results are returned, the doctor will call you), or (2) if an adjectival clause is non-restrictive (e.g., John, who is an excellent swimmer, was standing by the pool). However, punctuation of clauses should not be considered in assessing this skill at the elementary level.

This skill is related to Skill W6 GDpe 3000: Varies the structure and length of sentences in a paragraph.

W6 Lsp 2300 (continued)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Fill in the blank with a clause that tells more about the picture.

1. [picture: girl holding a large trophy]

   Gloria is the girl.

   Gloria is the girl who _____.

2. [picture: boy pointing at a car's flat tire]

   Danny saw a car.

   Danny saw a car that _____.

3. [picture: dog chasing a cat]

   The cat is running.

   The cat is running because _____.

4. [picture: runners crouched at starting line before a race. Starter is about to fire starting pistol.]

   The race will start.

   The race will start when _____.

Directions: The sentence doesn't tell enough about the picture. Which is the best way to tell more about the picture?

5. [picture: girl holding a large trophy]

   Gloria is the girl.

   A. Gloria is the girl who won the prize.
   B. Gloria is the girl. Gloria won the prize.
   C. Gloria is the girl and Gloria won the prize.

W6 Lsp 2300 (continued)

6. [picture: boy pointing at a car's flat tire]

   Danny saw a car.

   A. Danny saw a car that had a flat tire.
   B. Danny saw a car. Danny saw a flat tire.
   C. Danny saw a car and Danny saw a flat tire.

7. [picture: dog chasing a cat]

   The cat is running.

   A. The cat is running because it's being chased by a dog.
   B. The cat is running. The cat is being chased by a dog.
   C. The cat is running and the cat is being chased by a dog.

8. [picture: runners crouched at starting line before a race. Starter is about to fire starting pistol.]

   The race will start.

   A. The race will start when the gun is fired.
   B. The race will start. The gun will be fired.
   C. The race will start and the gun will be fired.

Item-Description

Either of two formats may be used in assessing this skill. Both formats employ a picture and a related sentence as the stimulus. The sentence refers to the subject of the picture, but omits a detail that can be seen in or inferred from the picture.

Items 1-4 are constructed-response items. The sentence is repeated beneath the stimulus, but a blank space is inserted where a modifying clause can be placed. A relative pronoun or subordinating conjunction (e.g., who, that) is provided before the blank space to assure the use of a subordinate clause rather than a prepositional phrase. The student generates an appropriate clause and writes it in the blank.

Items 1 and 2 are examples of sentence expansions with adjectival subordinate clauses, while items 3 and 4 are examples of adverbial subordinate clauses.

W6 Lsp 2300 (continued)

Since sentence expansions will vary in content and quality, criteria must be established for evaluating student responses. Responses may be classified as good, acceptable, or unacceptable in accordance with the following considerations:

Good: The student uses an accurate (precise, exact) modifying clause (e.g., Gloria is the girl who won the prize; Danny saw a car that had a flat tire; The cat is running because it's being chased by a dog; The race will start when the gun is fired).

Acceptable: The student uses an appropriate modifying clause (e.g., Gloria is the girl who won; Danny saw a car that stopped; The cat is running because it has to; The race will start when they go). Such responses are grammatically correct, but limited in scope.

Unacceptable: The student does not use an appropriate modifying clause. This may include a failure to respond or an inappropriate response (e.g., Gloria is the girl who did).

Items 5-8 are selected-response items that assess the student's ability to use subordinate clauses for variety and clarity in sentence construction. The stimulus is identical to that used in the constructed-response items. The student is asked to choose the "best" of three ways of expanding the information provided in the stimulus.

Items 5 and 6 are examples of sentence expansions with adjectival subordinate clauses, while items 7 and 8 are examples of adverbial subordinate clauses.

The correct answer (all A's) is the stimulus sentence expanded with an appropriate subordinate clause. Choice B is the stimulus sentence plus another simple sentence containing further information about the picture. Choice C is a compound sentence containing the relevant details, but unnecessarily repeating the subject in the second segment of the compound or, as in the case of item 8, reversing a cause and effect relationship.

Since each format assesses a slightly different aspect of this skill, it is desirable that both be employed. Where this is not possible, the constructed-response format is the preferred mode of assessment as it more nearly resembles actual writing practice.

Skill: W6 Lsp 3000

Skill Statement

Combines sentences to form sentences with coordinate noun and verb phrases.

Skill Description

The student combines grammatically parallel sentences by joining coordinate noun and verb phrases with and or or (e.g., Jim went shopping. Ann went shopping. → Jim and Ann went shopping; Tony washed the dishes. Tony dried the dishes. → Tony washed and dried the dishes).

Comment: Other coordinating conjunctions such as but can be used to combine noun and verb phrases (e.g., Jim started the test. Jim did not finish it. → Jim started the test but did not finish it). However, most textbooks only teach this skill with and and or, and or is taught less frequently than and.

Combining sentences with coordinate noun and verb phrases requires several steps. These are explained below.

Jim went shopping. + Ann went shopping. → Jim and Ann went shopping.

(1) The student identifies and deletes one of the identical sentence parts (i.e., went shopping).
(2) The student identifies the coordinate sentence parts (i.e., Jim and Ann).
(3) Understanding correct word order, the student combines the coordinate elements in the proper position within the sentence (i.e., Jim and Ann went shopping vs. Jim went shopping and Ann).

This skill is related to Skill W6 GDpe 3000: Varies the structure and length of sentences in a paragraph.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write these pairs of sentences as one sentence by putting sentence parts together. Put the subject noun parts together if they are the same, or put the predicate verb parts together if they are the same. Write the new sentence on the line. Your new sentence will have fewer words than the two sentences do.

1. Jack had ice cream for dessert.
   Susan had ice cream for dessert.

   [Jack and Susan had ice cream for dessert].

2. The cat sat in the chair.
   The cat purred softly.

   [The cat sat in the chair and purred softly].

3. Tony washed the dishes.
   Tony waxed the floor.

   [Tony washed the dishes and waxed the floor].

4. Steve rides the bus to school.
   Steve walks to school.

   [Steve rides the bus or walks to school].

Item Description

Constructed-response items are recommended for assessing this skill. Selected-response items could be developed, but distractors would be difficult to design. Furthermore, sentence-combining skills are usually employed within the context of a writing assignment. That is, students use coordinate constructions in their own writing to provide greater sentence variety. Therefore, assessment of this skill should require students to produce sentences with coordinate noun and verb phrases rather than to select correctly combined sentences.

The sample items represent four types of coordinate constructions that should be included in assessment:

1. Item 1 requires the student to combine two coordinate subject noun phrases. The past tense is used in this item so that subject-verb agreement does not become part of the assessment. If the present tense were used, the student would also be required to use a different verb form (e.g., Jack has ice cream. Susan has ice cream. → Jack and Susan have ice cream.).

2. Item 2 requires the student to combine coordinate verb phrases that do not contain direct objects, but that do contain adverbs or adverbial phrases.

3. Item 3 requires the student to combine coordinate verb phrases that contain separate direct objects.

4. Item 4 requires the student to combine coordinate verb phrases with the conjunction or. This item is more difficult than the others because students must recognize that the two verb phrases are alternatives, and that the prepositional phrase to school must be deleted from the second verb phrase. The recognition of alternatives and the double deletion (subject and prepositional phrase) may make this item type so difficult that examiners may not wish to include it in the assessment of this skill.

W6 Lsp 3000 (continued)

The correct responses to these items are shown in brackets. Some students may respond by constructing compound sentences (e.g., Jack had ice cream for dessert, and Susan had ice cream for dessert). However, since the directions specify that the sentences are to be combined with coordinate phrases, compound sentences are not appropriate responses.

Skill: W5 Lt 1100

Skill Statement

Uses transitional expressions to link sentences: chronological expressions.

Skill Description

The student uses words or phrases to signal a time relationship between the content of the new sentence and the one before it. The purpose of transitional expressions is to tie separate parts into a unified whole; they indicate something has gone before and help to tie that something to what follows; they are coherence devices.

Time relationships conveyed by transitional expressions can be (1) past time (e.g., earlier, yesterday), (2) concurrent time (e.g., in the meantime, while), (3) subsequent time (e.g., next, then, later). Past time and concurrent time require more difficult stimuli and more difficult processing, so assessment for this skill should focus only on expressions for subsequent time.

The following list contains other frequently used chronological transitions:

immediately	second	last
afterward	after	finally
soon	after that	from that time on

Knowledge of the terms transitional expression or chronological expression is not prerequisite to this skill.

Comment: This is an important subskill of writing a narrative and can be assessed by a writing sample. However, it is not assessed by the writing sample for Skill DPpr 3000 because the story can be successfully completed without including time relators. This skill can also be appropriately assessed by the selected-response item type described below.

Chronological transitions are also used in expository writing when they are the most logical expressions for the content to be explained.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which is the best word to use in the blank?

1. Mike walked carefully toward the opening to the cave. Suddenly he stopped at its edge when he

W5 Lt 1100 (continued)

heard the strange noise. _____ he stepped through the dark opening. Mike was finally inside the place that always frightened him.

A. Then
B. Happily
C. Earlier
D. While

2. It was Jan's birthday, and a big brightly wrapped box lay on the table. She picked it up. Did she feel something move inside? She pulled away the paper. What was that noise she heard? _____ she lifted the lid and peeped inside. Up popped the puppy she had wanted at the pet store.

A. Finally
B. Sleepily
C. Yesterday
D. Meanwhile

3. One day a group of circus clowns decided to tease a dangerous lion. First they roared at the lion. Next they jumped around like monkeys outside his cage. _____ they poked at it through the bars. They felt very brave. But how dangerous can a sleeping lion be?

A. After that
B. Helplessly
C. Before
D. At the same time

Item Description

The stimulus is a narrative paragraph that clearly conveys a sequence of events. The setting/situation of the paragraph implies by its tone that the character involved could only have a certain general attitude toward the situation (this criterion is necessary for the adverb distractor explained below). The paragraph should be short so that the reading load does not increase the difficulty level of the task.

The student selects the word that best fits the sentence that has a missing word (identified by a blank). Transitional expressions may appear at other places in a sentence; however, items for initial blanks should be easier for the student. When the blank comes at the beginning of the sentence, all choices should be capitalized.

The correct answer is a transitional expression for time that is clearly clued by the sentences before and after the sentence with the blank; it fits in with the sequence of the activities in the

W5 Lt 1100 (continued)

paragraph. One distractor type (all type B's) should be an adverb that does not reflect the probable state of mind of the character involved in the action; this is the easiest distractor type if the specific distractor is carefully selected on the basis of the tone conveyed by the stimulus.

Another distractor type (all type C's) is an expression that shows earlier time; this distractor does not fit the time sequence and sometimes transforms the sentence into a sentence fragment as in item 3. The most difficult distractor type (all choice D's) is an expression for concurrent time because the time range is less defined than it is with expressions for earlier time. This type will sometimes transform the sentence into a fragment; also, it does not fit the sequence suggested by the paragraph.

Skill: W5 Lt 1200

Skill Statement

Uses transitional expressions to link sentences: spatial expressions.

Skill Description

The student uses words or phrases to signal a spatial relationship between the content of a new sentence and the one that precedes it. The purpose of the transitional expressions is to tie separate parts into a unified whole; they are coherence devices: They indicate a spatial relationship between the parts of a whole, whether that whole is a single object such as a tree that can be described, for example, from top to bottom, or a complex configuration of objects such as an entire classroom that requires a more sophisticated presentation.

The following list contains examples of transitional expressions that are frequently used to indicate spatial relationships:

nearby	below	next to
across	to the left	on the side
beyond	to the right	in the same place
overhead	against	as far as
above	in the distance	returning to

Knowledge of the terms transitional expression or spatial expressions is not prerequisite to this skill.

Comments: This is an important subskill of writing a description. Although this skill may not always be included separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, students employ this skill to complete descriptive products that are listed.

Spatial transitions are often used in expository writing when they are the most logical expressions for the content to be explained. (See the writing sample assessment for Skill W5 DPpr 4000.)

Assessment

Comment: This skill is also assessed by the writing sample that is described for Skill W5 DPpr 1000.

Sample Items

Directions: Which word or words are the most exact for completing the sentence? The word or words tell where each thing is in the picture.

W5 Lt 1200 (continued)

[Picture of a tree on a hill above a lake with a boy sitting under the tree and reading a book. Ducks are on the water in the middle of the lake. A girl is fishing on the bank to the right.]

1. A tree is on the hill. _____ the tree is a boy who is reading a book.

   A. Under
   B. By
   C. At the same time
   D. Above

2. A lake is at the bottom of the hill. _____ some ducks are swimming in the water.

   A. In the middle of the lake
   B. In the same place
   C. Also
   D. In the air

3. _____ the lake, a girl is fishing.

   A. Beside
   B. Near
   C. Meanwhile
   D. Below

Item Description

The stimulus is a picture and sentences that describe elements in the picture. Each sentence contains a blank where a spatial expression for coherence/transition belongs. The student chooses the most exact of four spatial expressions. One distractor type (all B's) is appropriate, but it is not so precise as the correct answer (all A's). Another distractor is either a logical or chronological expression (all C's). The final distractor type is a spatial expression that does not correspond to the position of the pictured entity.

In sentences written for completion or word choice, enough context must be provided to elicit the appropriate expressions. They must also be written so that the context does not elicit expressions other than spatial expressions; directions that explicitly solicit spatial terms help preclude the problem. Although the transitional expression/coherence device may appear at positions other than the first of the sentence, items here are limited to that position because they are easier for students and are more clearly seen as transitions in that position.

Skill: W5 Lt 1300

Skill Statement

Uses transitional expressions to link sentences: logical expressions.

Skill Description

The student uses words or phrases to signal a logical relationship between the content of a new sentence and the one that precedes it. The purpose of transitional expressions is to tie separate parts into a unified whole; they are coherence devices that indicate the specific relationships between ideas.

At this level, logical expressions may include time relators (see Skill W5 Lt 1100) and space relators (see Skill W5 Lt 1200) as well as transitions that indicate other logical relationships such as cause and effect (e.g., because), comparison (e.g., also), and contrast (e.g., on the other hand).

The following list contains examples of transitional expressions that are frequently used to indicate logical relationships in addition to those listed for the time and space expressions and to those noted above:

and	so	therefore
but	nevertheless	consequently
yet	still	as a result
for	since	in spite of
also	besides	accordingly

Comment: This is an important subskill of expository writing. Although this skill may not always be included separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, students employ this skill to complete expository products that are listed.

Assessment

Comment: This skill is assessed by the writing sample for Skill W5 DPpr 4000.

Skill: W4 Lt 2100

Skill Statement

Uses figurative comparisons: simile.

Skill Description

The student uses simile structure to make a figurative comparison. The comparison clarifies a concept, enhances the description of an entity, object, or sensory experience, or contributes to the esthetic effect of the student's prose or poetry. Knowledge of the term simile is not prerequisite to this skill, but is helpful.

Although a literal comparison juxtaposes entities that are generally equivalent on the basis of classification (e.g., dogs and cats are both animals), a simile compares two essentially unlike entities: A simile is a contrived comparison that suggests that the two disparate entities being compared share a single attribute which makes them strikingly alike in one way. The primary comparison element (see C_1 below) is related to the surrounding text. The secondary comparison element (see C_2 below) is brought into the context solely to indicate the attribute it shares with the primary element. The attribute (see A below) shared may be stated or inferred. The entities compared at this grade level should both be concrete, although a simile may pair concrete/abstract elements or abstract/abstract elements.

Similes begin with word signals (see S below) that identify them as comparisons of simile construction. Frequently used signals include as (or as...as) and like; the word than is also a signal which co-occurs with a comparative term (e.g., faster than) that expresses the quality which is attributed to the entities being compared:

A kite is [like] a colorful bird.
C_1 S C_2

The daisies in the field are fresh [as] morning.
C_1 A S C_2

The cow was [as] fat [as] a blown-up balloon.
C_1 A C_2 (S)

Kim is taller [than] a pine tree.
C_1 A S C_2

W4 Lt 2100 (continued)

Similes are often used in prose description. They also appear with high frequency in all forms of poetry.

Assessment

Comment: Use of similes is difficult to assess without an instructional context. However, items are provided below so that assessment specifications are complete.

Sample Items

Directions: Finish the sentence with a good simile that describes the underlined word.

1. The sky is bluer than _____.

2. That star is as bright as _____.

3. My desk is like _____.

Comment: The word simile may not be in students' reading or oral vocabularies. If not, the following directions should be substituted for those above:

"Fill in the blank with words that finish the description of the underlined word. Use words that show how it is like something that is different in most other ways, like a tall man and a high tree."

Although these directions are complex, literal comparisons might be elicited if directions were simplified.

Item Description

The stimulus is a sentence that must be completed with a figurative comparison. For item 1, the stimulus type consists of a subject (with determiner), the linking verb is, a comparative adjective, and the signal word than. For item 2, the stimulus type consists of a subject (with determiner), the linking verb is, the first of the paired signal words (as...as), an adjective, and the second as signal word. For the last item, the stimulus type consists of a subject (with determiner), the linking verb is, and the signal word like. This latter type is the most difficult assessment type because its structure does not include so much information as the other types to guide sentence completion.

W4 Lt 2100 (continued)

The student fills in the blank with words that appropriately complete the figurative comparison. Students' responses can be scored on a three-point scale:

Good:	The simile is properly constructed, conveys an image, and is fresh and original.
Acceptable:	A simile is properly constructed.
Unacceptable:	A simile is not constructed.

In addition to providing diagnostic information on whether students can construct similes, these items provide information about their degree of competence because the stimuli for items 1 and 2 provide the attribute; the stimulus for item 3 does not. Students who can successfully complete the first two items but not the last item need additional instruction on similes.

Selected-response items are not appropriate for assessing this skill because appropriate distractors are difficult to impossible to construct. Distractors that are not similes (i.e., literal rather than figurative comparisons) would assess knowledge of the term simile rather than the construction of similes. Cliché similes as distractors might be considered fresh and original to students who have never before encountered these expressions. Finally, choosing between/among original similes is too subjective a task.

Skill: W5 Lt 2200

Skill Statement

Uses figurative comparisons: metaphor.

Skill Description

The student uses a metaphor structure to make a figurative comparison. The comparison clarifies a concept, enhances the description of an entity, object, or sensory experience, or contributes to the esthetic effect of the student's prose or poetry. Knowledge of the term metaphor is not prerequisite to this skill, but is helpful.

Although a literal comparison juxtaposes entities that are generally equivalent on the basis of classification (e.g., dogs and cats are both animals), a metaphor (as simile, which is described for Skill W4 Lt 2100) compares two essentially unlike entities. Metaphors differ from similes in that they are implied rather than stated comparisons--metaphors do not have signal words such as like, than, as.

A metaphor is a contrived comparison that suggests that two disparate entities being compared share a single attribute which makes them strikingly alike in one way. The primary comparison element (see C_1 below) is related to the surrounding text. The secondary comparison element (see C_2 below) is brought into the context solely to indicate the attribute it shares with the primary element. The attribute (see A below) shared may be stated or inferred. The entities compared at this grade level should both be concrete, although a metaphor may pair concrete/abstract elements or abstract/abstract element.

Major categories of metaphors include three types: (1) simple metaphors with linking verbs (see examples below); (2) content-verb metaphors that either suggest the attribute shared by the entities being compared or are comparison elements themselves (e.g., The drums coughed); (3) noun metaphors that reflect a characteristic of one of the two comparison elements or are comparison elements themselves (e.g., He preens the pure snow of his feathers).

Of the three major categories of metaphors, only category (1) is appropriate for this grade level. This category of linking verb metaphors has two subgroups:

(a) Two comparison elements are stated, with both comparison elements being nouns--N-LV-N--with (see 2 below) or without (see 1 below) additional information to explain the comparison:

1. My heart is a clock.
   C_1 C_2

W5 Lt 2200 (continued)

2. My heart is a clock that ticks all day.
   C_1 C_2 A

(b) A noun is given with an adjective--N-LV-ADJ--with the adjective being the attribute of an unstated comparison element, usually a person or other animate being (thus creating a member of a special class of metaphor: personification):

1. The flowers are thirsty.
   C_1 A

Subgroup (b) is not included for assessment here because items that can elicit only adjectives and not verbs are difficult to construct without using the grammatical term adjective; however, items would then assess knowledge of that term. Metaphors are often used in prose description. They also appear with high frequency in all forms of poetry.

Assessment

Comment: Use of metaphors is difficult to assess without an instructional context. However, items are provided below so that assessment specifications are complete.

Sample Items

Directions: Complete the sentence with a good metaphor that tells about the underlined word.

1. The skater is a _____.

2. The sun is a _____.

3. The stream is a _____.

Comment: The word metaphor may not yet be in students' reading or oral vocabularies. If not, the following directions should be substituted for those above: "Fill in the blank with words that finish the description of the underlined word. Use words that name something that is like the underlined word in one way, but is different in most ways, such as a tall man and a high tree." Although these directions are complex, literal comparisons might be elicited if directions were simplified.

W5 Lt 2200 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is a sentence that can be completed with a figurative comparison. The student completes the sentence by composing such a figurative comparison.

Each sentence consists of a determiner + noun + linking verb + determiner + blank. This sentence pattern will elicit a noun metaphor. Restrictions in the directions also preclude the construction of a simile rather than a metaphor.

The assessment for N-LV-N metaphors should not include the additional information (the attribute) that tells how the two nouns are alike because such items assess comprehension and logic rather than metaphor construction. For example, item 1 (of the first format) is changed to include that information in the following sentence:

The skater (C_1) is a _____ (C_2) that twirls and whirls (A).

Given this sentence frame, the student would solve the puzzle of what thing twirled and whirled that could be compared with a skater. Although this item is appropriate for an early stage of instruction on metaphors, it is inappropriate for assessment.

Students' responses can be scored on a three-point scale:

Good:	The metaphor is properly constructed, conveys an image, and is fresh and original.
Acceptable:	The metaphor is properly constructed.
Unacceptable:	A metaphor is not constructed.

Selected-response items are not appropriate for assessing this skill because appropriate distractors are difficult to impossible to construct. Distractors that are not metaphors (i.e., literal rather than figurative comparisons) would assess knowledge of the term metaphor rather than the construction of metaphors. Cliché metaphors as distractors might be considered fresh and original to students who have never before encountered these expressions. Finally, choosing between/among original metaphors is too subjective a task.

Skill: W4 Lvs 1100

Skill Statement

Uses verse form: couplets

Skill Description

The student writes two lines of verse with end rhyme (see Skill W4 Lvs 2000). A couplet generally has two rhymed lines with similar structure and length, and the thought/idea/image expressed is complete in the two lines. However, the technical aspects of structure and length are not required of students at this grade level; the only technical requirement is that the second of the two succeeding lines must rhyme with the first line. Consequently, knowledge of the concept of rhyme is prerequisite to this skill, although it may be taught and assessed concurrently. Knowledge of the punctuation and capitalization rules for poetry writing are not prerequisite to this skill.

Comment: This is an important subskill of poetry writing. Although this skill may not always be included separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, students cannot complete many poetry products that are listed without employing this skill (e.g., limericks).

Assessment

Comments: This skill is also assessed by a writing sample for this grade level, which is described for W4 DPpo 1000. See those specifications for the sample item and the item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criterion.

Use of couplets is difficult to assess without an instructional context. However, items are provided below so that assessment specifications are complete.

Skill W4 Lvs 2000 (Uses end rhyme) is also assessed by the items below.

Sample Items

Directions: Read the first line of the poem. Complete the idea in the line by writing a line that rhymes.

1. The sound of a train when it passes at night

_____.

W4 Lvs 1100 (continued)

2. The roses in the park are pink and red.

_____

3. The smell of popcorn fills the air.

_____.

Item Description

The stimulus is a rhythmic sentence that conveys a sensory image. The student writes a line that completes the image presented in the first line and that rhymes with the last word.

The stimulus sentence is long enough to enable students to use adequate words in their own lines to complete the image appropriately. The last word in the stimulus line ends with a high-frequency vowel-consonant sound (although an additional final consonant sound may also occur in that word--/VCC/). High-frequency elements are amenable to a wider range of potential rhymes. Appropriate punctuation (or lack of punctuation) is included to preclude students' becoming preoccupied with or inhibited by punctuation skills.

The items all involve descriptive writing because writing descriptive poetry is more appropriate for this grade level than writing narrative poetry. The items cover a variety of sensory images rather than to focus on only one type. The first item conveys an auditory image for students to complete. Item 2 describes a visual image. The last item entails both olfactory and gustatory images [see Skill W3 Ld 4000].

Students' responses may be scored on a three-point scale:

Good:	The line rhymes and completes the image.
Acceptable:	The line rhymes or is close to rhyming (e.g., the rhyming element in the last word is /id/ rather than /ed/ as a rhyme for red).
Unacceptable:	No actual or approximate rhyme is written.

Selected-response items are not provided for this skill because appropriate items would require extensive reading and rereading to discriminate among lines/couplets as answer choices.

Skill: W5 Lvs 1200

Skill Statement

Uses verse form: stanza.

Skill Description

The student organizes lines of verse into stanzas. Technically, a stanza is a recurrent grouping of lines in terms of length, metrical form, and rhyme scheme. However, stanzas at this grade level are defined in accordance with a simpler and frequent interpretation of stanzas as a division of thought similar in poetry to the paragraph in prose. A stanza here may be a single unit in isolation (e.g., a limerick) or one of several units (e.g., in a ballad).

Knowledge of the term stanza is not prerequisite to this skill.

Comment: This is an important subskill of poetry writing. Although this skill may not always be included separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, students must employ this skill to complete some poetry products that are listed.

Assessment

Comment: This skill is assessed by a writing sample for this grade level, which is described for Skill W3 DPpo 2000. See those specifications for the sample item and the item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criterion.

Skill: W4 Lvs 2000

Skill Statement

Uses end rhyme.

Skill Description

The student uses rhyme to end lines of verse. The student must perceive rhyme when identity of sound exists between accented syllables occupying corresponding positions at the end of two or more lines of verse. The student may use a variety of specific end rhymes. These rhymes may be structured into couplets (see Skill W4 Lvs 1100), they may occur for alternating lines, or they may occur in other patterns, such as every third line.

Comment: This is an important subskill of poetry writing. Although this skill may not always be included separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, students cannot complete many poetry products that are listed without employing this skill (e.g., limericks).

Assessment

Comment: Constructed-response assessment for this skill is provided by items described for Skill W4 Lvs 1100. This skill is also assessed by a writing sample for this grade level, which is described for Skill W3 DPpo 1000. See those specifications for the sample item and the item description. See the scoring key and scoring guide for that sample to relate this skill to the concomitantly evaluated criterion.

Skill: W4 Lvs 3000

Skill Statement

Uses unrhymed verse.

Skill Description

The student writes lines of verse which purposely do not rhyme. "Verse" refers here to the rhythmical and/or metrical composition of poetic forms.

The student must understand that all poetry does not necessarily rhyme and that when the rhyme structure is not present to distinguish the lines as poetry, another composition characteristic must be present to produce the poetic effect. The characteristic may be the rhythm created by careful selection of words for their syllable number and/or stress. At this grade level, however, selection may be based mainly on semantic content. (Semantic content is discussed for descriptive-writing skills.)

Understanding of the concept of word parts (or syllables) and of the terms rhyme and poetry (or verse) is prerequisite to this skill.

Comment: Although this skill may not always be listed separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, this skill is an important writing subskill of "Writes haiku." Haiku is a poetry product frequently included in elementary school textbooks and on state competency lists.

Assessment

Comment: Ideally, this skill should be assessed as part of a writing sample. (The use of unrhymed verse is not amenable to selected-response assessment.) However, the stimulus for such a writing sample would necessarily limit the student's response to a particular poetic form so that valid scoring criteria could be applied to the sample. The poetic form most appropriate for eliciting unrhymed verse at this grade level is the haiku and cinquaine. However, these two forms are not universally taught or assessed. Therefore, no formal assessment of this skill is presented here. If assessment is desired, the use of unrhymed verse can be informally evaluated by teachers through poetry writing assignments.

Skill: W5 Lvs 4000

Skill Statement

Uses rhythm.

Skill Description

The students uses rhythm in writing poetry. At this grade level, rhythm consists of the recurrence of a particular number of stressed and unstressed syllables. Also at this grade level, common patterns include iambic lines (i.e., unstressed, stressed, unstressed, stressed, etc.) and anapestic lines (i.e., unstressed, unstressed, stressed). The latter pattern occurs in limericks, which many students write at the elementary grade levels.

The student is not expected to produce consistency in the rhythm, although enough repetition of the appropriate numbers of syllables as stressed and unstressed must occur to make the pattern discernable.

The term syllable is prerequisite to this skill, but the terms rhythm, iambic, and anapestic are not.

Comments: This is an important subskill of poetry writing. Although this skill may not always be listed separately on authoritative lists of desired competencies, students cannot complete some poetry products without employing this skill (e.g., limericks).

Rhythm is also a feature of prose writing, but this dimension of the skill is too advanced for elementary grade students.

Assessment

Comment: This skill is assessed by the writing sample described for Skill W5 DPpo 2000.

REFERENCES

Cronnell, B. A technical lexicon for elementary communication skills (Technical Note No. 3-79-03). Los Alamitos, California: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1979.

Harris, A. J., & Jacobson, M. D. Basic elementary reading vocabularies. New York: Macmillan, 1972.

Humes, A. Construcing items for assessing English writing skills (Technical Note forthcoming). Los Alamitos, California: SWRL Educational Research and Development.

Humes, A. Writing skills for grades 1-6 (Technical Note No. 3-79-23). Los Alamitos, California: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1979.